

## WORD AND IMAGE IN THE *SACRA PARALLELA* (CODEX PARISINUS GRAECUS 923)

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IN THE PRESENT ARTICLE, my aim is to examine the close relationship of word and image in the pages of codex Parisinus graecus 923, in order to draw conclusions or at least raise questions regarding the method of production of this important ninth-century Byzantine manuscript. The evidence presented in the following pages indicates that Kurt Weitzmann's theory on the production of codex Parisinus graecus 923 and its relation to pre-iconoclast manuscript illumination cannot be substantiated. According to the alternative approach proposed here, this codex appears to have been a unique production, in which the close synergy of text

and image was designed to promote the didactic value of the *Sacra Parallela* compilation.

Codex graecus 923 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris is for many reasons exceptional in the surviving corpus of Byzantine manuscripts. It is the earliest known copy of the so-called *Sacra Parallela*, a florilegium of mostly biblical and patristic texts, the original of which is attributed to the eighth-century theologian John of Damascus. At present there is no single manuscript that preserves this work in its original form, only codices of later recensions that preserve parts of the initial florilegium. Dating from the ninth century, the *Sacra Parallela* of Paris is the earliest of approximately thirty such manuscripts.<sup>1</sup>

I would like to thank the Program in Hellenic Studies of Princeton University and the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto for offering me postdoctoral fellowships in the years 2004–2005 and 2005–2006 respectively, during which a large part of my time was dedicated to my research on cod. Paris. gr. 923. Only a portion of this research is presented here. The final version of this article was prepared during a postdoctoral fellowship for the year 2006–2007 at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. I thank my Ph.D. thesis supervisor, Prof. Robin Cormack, for directing my attention to this important manuscript and suggesting that I work on it. I am very grateful to Dr. Christian Förstel, Département des Manuscrits (division occidentale) of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, for permission to study cod. Paris. gr. 923 in the original, and to Dr. Ioanna Rapti for her generous hospitality. I would also like to thank Dr. Patricia Skotti for her comments and bibliographic references. I am grateful to Joel Kalvesmaki for his collaboration and conscientious work for the improvement of the article. I am particularly indebted to the *DOP* editorial board and the two external readers for their valuable suggestions and to the editor, Dr. Alice-Mary Talbot, for dedicating much of her valuable time to meticulously correct my English. Any shortcomings in this paper are entirely my responsibility.

Figs. 10–15, 21–23, 28–30, 32, 34–35, 39–40, 42, 45–47, 49–51, 54, 62–66, 67–69, and 72 have been reproduced with the permission of Princeton University Press, after K. Weitzmann, *The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela: Parisinus Graecus 923* (Princeton, 1979), figs. 409, 454, 447, 412, 425, 419, 180, 175, 174, 153, 166, 480, 213, 554, 555, 646–47, 357, 78, 115, 161, 63, 129, 130, 420–24, 134, 393, 561, and 41. Because of high copyright fees, I was forced to reduce the number of images included in this article. I thank the Committee on Research of the University of California, Santa Cruz for providing a substantial part of the funds needed for reproduction and copyright fees.

1 The original work attributed to John of Damascus (the title of which does not survive, but is thought to have been the *Ἱερά*) was divided into three books, containing excerpts that dealt respectively with God, humankind, and pairs of virtues and vices. Each of these three books is separately preserved in a limited number of manuscripts. Although they are incomplete and abbreviated in relation to the original, these manuscripts give us an idea of its content and great length. Selections of chapters from all three books, compiled in continuous florilegia without a tripartite division (the abbreviated “*florilèges Damascéniens*” as Marcel Richard called them), were already in circulation in the 9th century, and survive in various recensions, two of which (the Vatican and the Rupefucaldian) were considered by Karl Holl the most important. The text published in 1712 by Michel Lequien (who introduced the title “*Sacra Parallela*” used ever since) belongs to the Vatican recension, but unfortunately is based on a fifteenth-century manuscript which is missing parts found in earlier codices. It is the only *Sacra Parallela* text that has been published; it is available in PG 95:1040–1588 and PG 96:9–441 (PG 96:441–544 contains excerpts from the Rupefucaldian recension that are not included in the Vatican version). The text of cod. Paris. gr. 923 is related to both basic recensions (Vatican and Rupefucaldian), but it does not belong to either of them (and so, obviously, its text does not always correspond to the text published in PG 95–96). Two small fragments of a *Sacra Parallela* text (codices Paris. Coislin 20 and Paris. suppl. gr. 1155) are also dated to the 9th century, but even if they might be earlier than cod. Paris. gr. 923, the latter is the earliest surviving manuscript rather than fragment of a *Sacra Parallela* florilegium. See K. Weitzmann, *The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela: Parisinus Graecus 923* (Princeton, 1979), 9, n. 24. For all the above see K. Holl, *Die Sacra Parallela des Johannes*

In general, the subjects treated in this Christian compilation are of theological, moral, and social import: they focus on the relationship of God and humankind, the virtues and vices of human nature, and the proper conduct of Christians toward their fellow human beings and the state and religious authorities. Other, similar florilegia also existed in Byzantium and survive in various recensions.<sup>2</sup> Our codex is not only the earliest surviving *Sacra Parallela* text, it is also the only one that is illustrated; indeed it is the only illustrated Byzantine florilegium of any kind that has been preserved.<sup>3</sup> In addition, at 35.6 × 26.5 cm it is among the largest illustrated Byzantine manuscripts known today, but originally it was even larger: its pages are now trimmed, and of the more than 420 original folios only 394 still survive.<sup>4</sup> Moreover,

Damascenus, TU 16.1 (Leipzig, 1897), esp. 42ff., 81–88, 161. Also M. Richard, “Florilèges spirituels grecs,” *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, fasc. XXXIII–XXXIV (Paris, 1962), 476–80, with references to previous literature (the recension to which cod. Paris. gr. 923 belongs, the “Florilegium PML,” is mentioned in columns 482–83). The main points of Richard’s analysis, still valid today, are summarized by P. Odorico, “La cultura della ΣΥΛΛΟΓΗ: (1) Il cosiddetto enciclopedismo Bizantino; (2) Le tavole del sapere di Giovanni Damasceno,” *BZ* 83 (1990): 1–21, esp. 13–20. I thank Dr. G. Papadogiannakis for drawing my attention to this article. The above issues are also mentioned to some extent by Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 8–10.

2 These were called by M. Richard *spiritual florilegia*, in distinction to those he called *dogmatic florilegia*. See Richard, “Florilèges spirituels grecs,” 475–511 and *ODB* 2:793–94.

3 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 10.

4 Weitzmann (ibid., 3) mentioned that “a note at the end of the manuscript from about the thirteenth or fourteenth century states that at that time it had ‘υκδ’ (= 424) folios.” For information on the missing pages (random losses throughout the codex), see ibid., 4–5. Weitzmann said also (ibid., 10) that cod. Paris. gr. 923 “is the largest illustrated Greek manuscript in existence.” He was probably referring to the unparalleled number of miniatures this codex contains (see below) rather than to the dimensions of the manuscript. Although the pages of this codex are fairly large in comparison to the majority of surviving Byzantine illustrated manuscripts, other codices are much larger in size, the largest of all (according to John Lowden) being a pair of Prophet Books with catenae, codices Vat. gr. 1153 and 1154, which are 50.8 × 37.7 cm and 49.5 × 35.5 cm respectively (the latter is trimmed). Several other illustrated manuscripts with catenae (for example, Prophet Books, Octateuchs, and Psalters) have dimensions similar to or larger than those of cod. Paris. gr. 923. For some examples see J. Lowden, *Illuminated Prophet Books: A Study of Byzantine Manuscripts of the Major and Minor Prophets* (University Park and London, 1988), 9, 14, 22, 32, 42; idem, *The Octateuchs: A Study in Byzantine Manuscript Illustration* (University Park and London, 1992), 11, 22, 26; idem, “Observations on Illustrated Byzantine Psalters,” *ArtB* 70 (1988): 245–48, esp. figs. 3–4 with valuable comparative material. A number of large illustrated manuscripts have survived from ninth-century Byzantium. One example which surpasses the dimensions of Paris. 923 is cod. Paris. gr. 510, 41 × 30 cm, 464 folios; see L. Brubaker,

the corpus of miniatures hosted in the pages of this codex is exceptionally rich: according to Weitzmann’s count, the extant folios contain 1,658 miniatures,<sup>5</sup> but originally the whole manuscript would have contained around 1,830 miniatures.<sup>6</sup> Although the majority are authors’ portraits, narrative illustrations are also numerous,<sup>7</sup> and the subject matter of some is unique in the surviving corpus of Byzantine art. On top of that, this large and richly illustrated codex makes lavish and extensive use of gold leaf, for most parts of the miniatures as well as most of the titles (chapter headings) and excerpt identifications within titles.<sup>8</sup> This technical characteristic is very rare among surviving Byzantine manuscripts.<sup>9</sup> In addition,

*Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium: Image as Exegesis in the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge, 1999), 2.

5 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 11.

6 Weitzmann (ibid., 6) counted “more than forty scenes and more than one hundred thirty busts and medallions” in the first 33 illustrated folios of the manuscript, and he estimated that the 31 missing folios would have contained at least as many miniatures. He also noted: “The study of illustrated books in general teaches us that the more richly a page is illustrated the more likely it is to be cut out by an admirer. Thus the estimate here seems rather conservative; numbers aside, we might venture to guess that some of the best and most interesting illustrations are lost.” It should be noted that this codex is densely illustrated throughout, so that the miniatures are not more numerous at the beginning and drastically fewer toward the end (as happens in other Byzantine manuscripts); thus Weitzmann’s use of the first 33 folios to estimate the number of missing miniatures (and not, for example, the last 33 folios) should not be considered inappropriate—although it is not clear why he used 33 folios instead of 31, that is, a number equal to the number of missing folios.

7 Weitzmann (ibid., 11) mentioned “402 scenic illustrations and 1,256 portraits” and added that “this division must be considered approximate.”

8 The impressive effect produced by the extensive use of gold can be glimpsed in ibid., color plate of folio 208r (unnumbered plate, before the black and white plates). The only parts of the miniatures that are not gilded are faces, hands, and other naked parts of bodies, and rarely some other elements like headgear and other attributes (e.g., monastic koukoulion and cruciform staff on fol. 208r mentioned above); natural elements like fire, rays of light, or the sea (e.g., fols. 68v, 69r, 207v); and animals (e.g., storks and swallows on fol. 200v). See ibid., 14–15, on the use of gold. See also Figs. 25–27 below.

9 Well known to scholars are the ninth-century codices Ambros. gr. 49–50 (Homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus) and Vat. gr. 749 (Book of Job). The use of gold is very extensive in the Milan Gregory and rather limited in the Vatican Job; see A. Grabar, *Les manuscrits grecs enluminés de provenance italienne (IXe–XIe siècle)* (Paris, 1972), 15–16. Grabar mentioned two other Byzantine manuscripts with the same technical characteristic (ibid., 25, 16): the ninth-century cod. Paris. gr. 2179 (Dioskorides), where gold leaf is used for the clothes of a very few figures at the beginning of the manuscript; and the eleventh-century cod. Paris. gr. 74, which is illustrated by minute figures, sometimes dressed in gold. Gold leaf is also used for the clothes of the figures which form the



the exceptionally high number of miniatures and titles in Parisinus 923 means that no other manuscript with the same technical characteristic contains as much gold leaf. In sum, the *Sacra Parallela* of Paris not only is exceptional in the preserved corpus of Byzantine art, but was intended to be exceptional in its time as well.

Parisinus 923 is dated to the ninth century,<sup>10</sup> a period when the dispute over the use of religious imagery was an important issue for much of the intellectual and ecclesiastical community of Byzantium, even after the triumph of the iconophiles in 843.<sup>11</sup> Since few illustrated manuscripts survive from that period, and since the Paris *Sacra Parallela* is of such an exceptional character, it is quite frequently discussed by Byzantinists, and certain aspects of its illustration have been studied to some extent;<sup>12</sup>

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illustrated initials in a little-known Byzantine manuscript: cod. Paris. gr. 41, a small Psalter (9.8 × 9.7 cm), 12th c., laconically described by H. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale et des autres bibliothèques de Paris et des départements* (Paris, 1898), 7. See also M. Evangelatou, "The Illustrated Initials of Codex Parisinus graecus 41," *Word and Image* 24, no. 2 (2008): 199–218.

**10** Obviously, a dating before or after 843 is also related to the issue of provenance. See Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 20–25. For an overview of the literature (concerning also dating and provenance) see L. Brubaker, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (ca. 680–850): The Sources; An Annotated Survey* (Ashgate, 2001), 49–50.

**11** This is evident, for example, in the writings of Patriarch Photios, who often referred to arguments of the iconophile literature about the status and function of images and was actively involved in the celebration for the restoration of holy images, as his speech on the inauguration of the mosaic in the apse of St. Sophia clearly shows. See, for example, the perceptive comments on this homily by L. James, "Senses and Sensibility in Byzantium," *Art History* 29 (2004): 522–37, esp. 529–32. The illustration of cod. Paris. gr. 510, which was commissioned by Photios, is characterized by various elements which betray his interest in iconophile theology. See Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning* (n. 4 above), for example, 51–52, 216, 220, 225, 281–307, 401. For an overview of the function of images according to iconophile theology and the possible links of the *Sacra Parallela* illustration to iconophile arguments, see L. Brubaker, "Byzantine Art in the Ninth Century: Theory, Practice, and Culture," *BMGS* 13 (1989): 56–81; eadem, *Vision and Meaning*, 19–58.

**12** For example, the style of the miniatures has been discussed by Grabar, *Manuscrits grecs de provenance italienne* (n. 9 above), 22–24, and by O. Oretskaia, "A Stylistic Tendency in Ninth-Century Art of the Byzantine World," *Zograf* 29 (2002–3): 5–18. Certain iconographic themes have been discussed, for example, by J. R. Martin, "An Early Illustration of the Sayings of the Fathers," *ArtB* 32 (1950): 291–95; E. Revel-Neher, "Problèmes iconographiques dans les *Sacra Parallela*," in *L'art et les révolutions: Actes [du] XXVIIe Congrès international d'histoire de l'art, Strasbourg, 1–7 septembre, 1989, sect. 4, Les Iconoclastes* (Strasbourg, 1992), 7–12; M. Bernabò, "L'illustrazione del Salmo 105 (106) a Bisanzio ed una nota sui *Sacra Parallela* di Parigi," *Medioevo e Rinascimento* 14 (2000): 85–109, esp. 108–9; and in works of more general scope by scholars such

however, no systematic and comprehensive study on the sources, method, and purpose of its production has ever been written.<sup>13</sup> The only monograph on this manuscript is the 1979 publication by Weitzmann,<sup>14</sup> but as I shall soon explain, his work is primarily a study, not of the *Sacra Parallela* itself, but of pre-iconoclast manuscript illumination as Weitzmann understood it on the basis of his assumptions about the Paris codex.

Weitzmann was interested not in the *Sacra Parallela* per se but in the glimpses of the past he thought he could catch through it.<sup>15</sup> The following quotations from his monograph are characteristic of his approach. He wrote: "It is no exaggeration to say that no other known manuscript can contribute so much to our knowledge of pre-iconoclastic book illumination, so little of which has survived. . . . The pictures are of only secondary interest as illustrations of a florilegium. Their primary interest lies in the fact that they are epitomes of vast lost miniature cycles whose existence can be proved by their migration into the *Sacra Parallela*."<sup>16</sup> "Only a handful of Early Christian illustrated manuscripts has come down to us, but clearly many lacunae in our knowledge can be filled by the excerpted miniature cycles in the *Sacra Parallela*. This constitutes perhaps the primary importance of our manuscript, more significant even than its value

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as J. Lowden and L. Brubaker, whose observations will be mentioned on various occasions in this article.

**13** Its exceptional nature is perhaps what makes this codex so difficult to approach and understand. The lack of a facsimile or other illustrated edition of the manuscript makes its study particularly challenging, especially for the evaluation of the relationship between word and image. In my experience, the script of cod. Paris. gr. 923 is discouragingly difficult to read from the microfilms available (especially because many of the lines in the letters of the text were made exceedingly thin by the scribe and are hardly visible). As access to this manuscript is very restricted for reasons of conservation, it would be of great service to Byzantinologists if the Bibliothèque Nationale were to produce a photographic record of the entire manuscript in digital form of high resolution.

**14** *Sacra Parallela* (n. 1 above).

**15** In his book review of the *Sacra Parallela* monograph, Cyril Mango rightly observed that what interested Weitzmann most was "the Paris. gr. 923 not in itself, but rather as a witness for the reconstruction of Early Christian picture cycles." See *The Antiquaries Journal* 62 (1982): 162.

**16** Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, vii. C. Walter, "Liturgy and the Illustration of Gregory of Nazianzen's (sic) Homilies: An Essay in Iconographical Methodology," *REB* 29 (1971): 188–89, has acutely criticized the use of the term "migration" for the copying of miniatures from one codex to the other (a term introduced by Weitzmann), because it undermines the active role of the painters in deciding which miniatures to adopt from their models ("miniatures do not move themselves"). I thank Prof. M. Papadaki for drawing my attention to this article.

as evidence in support of the existence of a Palestinian school of book illumination in the ninth century.”<sup>17</sup>

In order to prove his point, Weitzmann undertook the Herculean feat of identifying almost all of the 1,658 miniatures of the manuscript and the passages they illustrate (admittedly a very difficult task, essential for the advancement of research on the *Sacra Parallela*);<sup>18</sup> but he then published the miniatures with disregard for their original context. Both in his analysis and in the illustration of his book, the miniatures are not presented according to the foliation of the codex itself, but they are completely rearranged in order to reflect Weitzmann’s assumptions about the creation of the codex. In the manuscript itself, the portraits and narrative miniatures related to the biblical and patristic quotations of this codex appear mixed up in various combinations, as they follow the layout of the compilation: the florilegium is divided into 24 chapters, called *stoicheia*, each corresponding to one of the 24 letters (στοιχεῖα, hence the term for chapters) of the Greek alphabet. Under each stoicheion appear *titloi* (*tituli*/titles)—in other words, sub-chapters—that treat themes starting with the same letter. Under each title, relevant biblical and patristic passages are compiled according to a fixed order: first come excerpts from the Old and New Testaments according to the sequence of books within the Bible; then follow excerpts from the works of patristic authors and the only two non-Christian authors included in this florilegium, the Jewish writers Philo and Josephus Flavius.<sup>19</sup> Since the passages compiled in the *Sacra Parallela* were originally copied from codices that contained the complete texts providing the excerpts, Weitzmann thought that the miniatures that illustrate these passages were likewise copied from those codices, which must have been richly illuminated with extensive miniature cycles. Consequently, in his publication Weitzmann rearranged the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures in the order in which they would have appeared in those original codices: he grouped them into Octateuch miniatures, Kings and Chronicles miniatures and so on, aiming to recreate the illustration

of the hypothetical model books from which he assumed the miniatures were copied.<sup>20</sup>

Weitzmann’s hypothesis—that both compiled texts and corresponding images were copied into the *Sacra Parallela* from illustrated source books—is not unreasonable, but it implies that the first *Sacra Parallela* text ever produced was illustrated, something for which we have no proof, as I shall demonstrate below. Weitzmann’s intention to recreate the illustration of pre-iconoclast manuscripts on the basis of the *Sacra Parallela* illumination was of course in tune with his scholarly interests and methodology, which concentrated more on what was supposedly lost than on what was certainly preserved.<sup>21</sup> Such an approach could perhaps have been rewarding in the case of the Paris *Sacra Parallela* if it had been carried out with respect to the evidence and not according to axiomatic presumptions. However, it has already been pointed out that Weitzmann treated his theory on the creation of this codex not as a hypothesis in need of proof but as a fact according to which he interpreted its illustration.<sup>22</sup> By using this codex as a shattered mirror of the past rather than as an exceptional product of its epoch, he lost view of the material he had in hand, while at the same time he produced a rather distorted image of the material he wished to recreate.<sup>23</sup>

20 Ibid., vii. Since Weitzmann totally rearranged the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures in his monograph, he also published them in isolation from the passages they illustrate (only two of the 760 plates of his monograph present a folio of the manuscript in a full-page view; all the others present only the miniatures without the accompanying text). Moreover, Weitzmann never referred to the content of the titles under which the illustrated passages of the florilegium have been compiled, since he was not interested in the moral message that the passages and their illustrations were supposed to transmit in the context of this compilation. He mentioned only the correspondence of the Paris *Sacra Parallela* passages with the PG edition of the *Sacra Parallela*, so by using his monograph one can discover the context of an illustrated passage only when such a correspondence exists. In the many instances where there is no such correspondence, only an examination of the manuscript itself can provide the missing information. In addition, Weitzmann often used incorrect translations of the illustrated passages, so that the relationship of word and image is obscured even further. See, for example, pp. 134, 158, 162 below.

21 See especially K. Weitzmann, *Illustration in Roll and Codex: A Study of the Origins and Method of Text Illustration* (Princeton, 1947, repr. Princeton, 1970).

22 See, for example, R. Cormack’s review of Weitzmann’s monograph in *Burlington Magazine* 123 (1981): 170–72, esp. 171.

23 Lowden (*Prophet Books* [n. 4 above], 92) has summarized very eloquently the problems and limitations of such an approach to Byzantine art. His concluding sentence reads: “In the end, we shall gain a better comprehension of Byzantine art by studying it than by imagining it.”

17 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 257.

18 The present article is based on Weitzmann’s monograph and could not have been written without it.

19 The patristic and historical passages are not always organized in strict alphabetical order by author name; *ibid.*, 7–8. It should be noted that in most of the portraits accompanying their excerpts, Philo is dressed as a bishop and Josephus as a Byzantine official, with chlamys and tablion; *ibid.*, 252, 247.

Weitzmann was of course influenced by the scholarly tendencies of his time: both he himself and scholars reviewing his work have acknowledged that he formulated his theory on manuscript illumination under the influence of methodologies of textual criticism.<sup>24</sup> Like the philologists of his time who classified the surviving copies of a text with the aim to recreate the original, Weitzmann focused his attention on the formulation of stemmata of more or less degenerate miniature cycles which he believed would lead him to the recreation of the uncontaminated archetypes. But in this process he lost sight of the individuality of each illuminated manuscript, ignoring its place in a specific social and cultural context and overlooking important factors such as the relationship of word and image, the creative potential of specific artists, and their interaction with individual patrons.<sup>25</sup> No one can deny that Weitzmann's work made known to the scholarly community a great number of Byzantine works and that his contribution to the development of Byzantine studies was of paramount importance—both through his own scholarly activities and through the work of his students.<sup>26</sup> However, to use M.-L. Dolezal's words, Weitzmann's methodology was "timely and up-to-date," but "not timeless."<sup>27</sup>

In recent years, Weitzmann's methodological approach to manuscript illumination and, more specifically, his use of existing illustrated codices for the recreation of earlier super-illustrated archetypes, have been extensively criticized.<sup>28</sup> However, the most extreme

application of Weitzmann's super-archetype theory, his monograph on the *Sacra Parallela*, has not been thoroughly revisited. Although in their book reviews and other publications scholars such as Annemarie Weyl Carr, Robin Cormack, John Lowden, and Leslie Brubaker have expressed serious doubts about Weitzmann's approach to the *Sacra Parallela* illustration,<sup>29</sup> no systematic and thorough examination of the issue has ever been produced, and a number of scholars have accepted Weitzmann's conclusions.<sup>30</sup> This is partly due to the fact that, since Weitzmann published the miniatures of Parisinus 923 cut off from their textual context, it is very difficult if not impossible to check the validity of his numerous and at times sophisticated arguments until one examines the codex in person. After being given the opportunity to

edge' in Byzantium through Illuminated Manuscripts: Approaches and Conjectures," in *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. C. Holmes and J. Waring (Leiden–Boston–Cologne, 2002), 59–80, esp. 63–66, 68–69. See also J. Lowden, "The Beginnings of Biblical Illustration," in *Imaging the Early Medieval Bible*, ed. J. Williams (University Park, PA, 1999), 10–59. In the introduction to this volume (esp. 4–7), the editor reviewed Weitzmann's approach to manuscript illustration and termed it "the tyranny of the archetype" (5). See also Dolezal, "Weitzmann Reconsidered," esp. 239–40, 246–63. Walter, "Gregory of Nazianzen's Homilies" (n. 16 above), esp. 185–96, 208–9, also criticized Weitzmann's methodology in search of archetypes, especially as expressed in the publication of G. Galavaris on the liturgical homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus. Walter made some acute observations and suggestions about the purpose and characteristics of Byzantine art, but in the end he seemed to accept the *a priori* assumption that there was a "full illustrated edition" of Gregory's homilies, of which the liturgical manuscripts were later adaptations ("Gregory of Nazianzen's Homilies," 210).

<sup>29</sup> For book reviews of Weitzmann's monograph see: A. W. Carr, *ArtB* 65 (1983): 147–51; R. Cormack, *Burlington Magazine* 123 (1981): 170–72; J. Lowden, *Art International* 26 (1983): 57–58. I was not able to consult the book review by David H. Wright, *University Publishing* 9 (Summer 1980): 7–8. Lowden is also critical of Weitzmann's model theory about the *Sacra Parallela*, in *Octateuchs*, 80, and more specifically in *Prophet Books* (n. 4 above), 70–71, 80–82, 90. Likewise L. Brubaker, "Byzantine Culture in the Ninth Century: An Introduction," in *Byzantium in the Ninth Century: Dead or Alive?* ed. eadem (Aldershot, 1998), 68–71.

<sup>30</sup> For example, H. L. Kessler, *Speculum* 56 (1981): 208–10 (book review of the *Sacra Parallela* monograph), accepted Weitzmann's hypothesis on the extensive dependence of this manuscript's illustration on pre-existing models. Likewise C. Mango, in his book review on the same monograph, wrote, "There can be no doubt, furthermore, that the miniatures [of cod. Paris. gr. 923] were not created ad hoc: they were copied or, more often, adapted from other illustrated texts" (book review of *Sacra Parallela* [n. 15 above], 162). Revel-Neher ("Problèmes iconographiques dans les *Sacra Parallela*" [n. 12 above], 7, 12) accepted both the hypothesis that Paris. gr. 923 copied a lost illustrated *Sacra Parallela* and that this archetype's illustration was created on the basis of many other richly illuminated manuscripts.

<sup>24</sup> Weitzmann, *Roll and Codex*, 182–83 and Lowden, *Octateuchs* (n. 4 above), 7, 103. Weitzmann's methodology is related not only to textual criticism but also to another great achievement of Germanic scholarship: *Altertumswissenschaft*, the study of antiquity, which in Lowden's words "implied the superiority of classical culture over what followed." The relationship of Weitzmann's methodology to textual criticism is the subject of M.-L. Dolezal's article "Manuscript Studies in the Twentieth Century: Kurt Weitzmann Reconsidered," *BMGS* 22 (1998): 216–63. I thank Prof. Margaret Mullett for drawing my attention to this article.

<sup>25</sup> See, for examples, the comments by Dolezal, "Weitzmann Reconsidered," 240, 260–61.

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, the list of Weitzmann's works and a collection of papers by many of his students in *Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. C. Moss and K. Kiefer (Princeton, 1995).

<sup>27</sup> "Weitzmann Reconsidered," 262.

<sup>28</sup> J. Lowden's work is instrumental and very revealing in this respect (and the present article owes much to his perceptive and nuanced approach to Byzantine manuscript illustration). See, for example, Lowden, *Prophet Books*, esp. 58–59, 80–82, 90–92; idem, *Octateuchs*, esp. 37–38, 52, 68, 78, 80–81, 86, 101–4, 122–23; idem, "The Transmission of 'Visual Knowl-

undertake such research, thanks to the generosity of a number of institutions and individuals,<sup>31</sup> I will attempt to bring to light the significant relationship between the text and the illustration of the Paris *Sacra Parallela*, which Weitzmann overlooked in his publication.

Given the fragmentary and varied nature of the texts and consequently of the narrative miniatures included in the *Sacra Parallela* florilegium, I will not examine the illustration of the codex in strict progression from the first to the last folios. Instead, I will focus my analysis on thematic units or even individual miniatures, in order to highlight specific patterns of the word-and-image relationship, which can advance our understanding of the method of production of Parisinus 923. My intention is not to exhaust the issue but to make a contribution that, I hope, will inspire further study of this important manuscript. In a separate, forthcoming article I intend to present some observations on crucial issues that are not discussed here, such as the provenance of the manuscript and the relationship of its illustration to iconophile theory.

The first step in the analysis will be to establish that Parisinus 923 cannot be proven to be a copy of a lost illustrated *Sacra Parallela*. Casting away the shadow of such a hypothetical model will enable us to explore with greater liberty the word-and-image relationship in the codex. In the next three sections, the detailed examination of specific miniatures will reveal important qualities of the illustration: attention to detail, emphasis on narrative, and visual elaboration. The issue of iconographic sources will be treated next. The last section will present the conclusions of the previous analysis in regard to the method of the manuscript's production and the characteristics of its illustration.

### A Lost Illustrated *Sacra Parallela*?

The hypothesis that the Paris *Sacra Parallela* is a copy of an earlier illustrated *Sacra Parallela*, now lost, has been considered possible by a number of scholars.<sup>32</sup> Weitzmann advanced this hypothesis systematically, through

specific arguments and according to a specific scenario: in his opinion, the original illustrated *Sacra Parallela* was probably produced in the time of John of Damascus in the Monastery of Mar Saba in Palestine,<sup>33</sup> through the compilation of miniatures from at least seventeen other illustrated codices, which Weitzmann recreated on the basis of Parisinus 923.<sup>34</sup> Obviously, the use of a *Sacra Parallela* model would have influenced the relationship between word and image in our codex, and therefore the issue requires careful consideration.

First of all, Weitzmann's hypothesis that miniatures were copied into a *Sacra Parallela* codex from the manuscripts containing the complete texts that provided the passages compiled in the florilegium would be more logical if it is assumed that the copying of images happened at the same time the texts were copied, that is, when the compilation was created, and not at a later stage, when it was re-edited. However, the text that we call *Sacra Parallela* was originally produced in a very different format from the one we see in Parisinus 923, since it included more material, distributed in three distinct volumes.<sup>35</sup> Consequently, if the original three-volume florilegium was ever illustrated, the miniatures would often have appeared in different places and combinations from those we see in the Paris codex. Using an original *Sacra Parallela* to illustrate the rearranged passages of the Paris *Sacra Parallela* would often have been confusing and impractical for the miniaturists. Weitzmann was aware of this,<sup>36</sup> and for this reason he avoided suggesting directly that his hypothetical illustrated *Sacra Parallela* model contained the original version of the florilegium, in the form in which it was produced by John of Damascus. However, he did relate the rich illustration of the existing *Sacra Parallela* to John's iconophile convictions and his ardent support of icon veneration. Thus Weitzmann wrote that the mastermind behind the first illustrated *Sacra Parallela* was probably John of Damascus himself.<sup>37</sup> All these

model of Paris. gr. 923 and mentioned the opinions of A. Grabar and G. Cavallo on the possible Palestinian origin of this model.

33 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 10–11, 14, 257, 263.

34 Ibid., 257–62.

35 See n. 1 above, for more details.

36 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 8–9: "All scholars agree that the original form of the *Sacra Parallela* is not preserved and that all extant copies are from a period after the original three books were fused into one."

37 Ibid., 10. On p. 263, however, Weitzmann contradicted his previous statement by suggesting that the illustrated archetype of the *Sacra*

31 See my acknowledgment note.

32 For example, Revel-Neher, "Problèmes iconographiques dans les *Sacra Parallela*," 7. M. Bernabò, *Le miniature per i manoscritti greci del libro di Giobbe* (Florence, 2004), 155, made reference to a hypothetical

hypotheses are not only contradictory but also impossible to prove, and they tend to generate more hypotheses. Was the original three-volume version of the *Sacra Parallela* illustrated and used as the basis for the abbreviated *Sacra Parallela* version seen in the Paris codex? Or, was there in John's time an already abbreviated and illustrated version of his florilegium, later copied in the Paris codex? Weitzmann was ambiguous about the exact date and structure of his hypothetical illustrated archetype, but he then used two very specific arguments to support the dependence of the Paris *Sacra Parallela* on such an archetype. Given their specificity, these arguments deserve a close examination.

Weitzmann's first argument is based on the fact that at the beginning of six stoicheia (that is, six of the twenty-four chapters of the book) appears a figure that he identified as John of Damascus, the compiler of the florilegium (Figs. 1–6).<sup>38</sup> Weitzmann wrote: “[I]t seems strange that only a few stoicheia show author portraits at their beginnings. . . . It seems reasonable to assume that in the archetype each stoicheion had such a portrait and that a more negligent copyist has omitted some.”<sup>39</sup> Weitzmann was indeed right in identifying these figures as the compiler of the florilegium: the man appears next to biblical passages, but he does not seem to be a biblical figure, even in the two cases where he is not dressed as a monk (Figs. 2, 6). With one exception (Fig. 2), he looks at or even points to the titles of the florilegium, which were created by the compiler, rather than at the excerpted texts, which were written by biblical authors.<sup>40</sup> In four

miniatures he holds a pen, as if composing the compilation (Figs. 1–3, 5), but in three of these miniatures (and in the other two of his portraits where he does not hold a pen) he also makes the speaking gesture with the same right hand (Figs. 2–6). This unusual combination was perhaps intended to indicate that the compiler was both an author and a preacher, inasmuch as his compilation was destined both for individual readers and for preachers interested in using biblical and patristic wisdom for the edification of their audience.<sup>41</sup> For example, the speaking gesture is regularly employed in the ninth-century codex Ambrosianus E 49–50 to indicate the preaching activity of Gregory Nazianzenus: he appears in front of a congregation, making the speaking gesture with one hand and holding in the other a scroll with an excerpt of his homily.<sup>42</sup> The absence of scroll and audience in the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures in which the compiler is shown making the speaking gesture does not exclude the reference to preaching; on the contrary, in the context of this codex it might reinforce such a reference: with his gesture and his turning toward the text of his florilegium, the compiler admonishes the readers, who hold the manuscript in their hands and take the place of the audience (absent from the miniatures).

On the other hand, the compiler is not depicted by a consistent portrait type: he does not always wear the same outfit, and more importantly he does not even have the same beard, which in Byzantine art is a basic element of portrait identification. One should compare his straight, thick, and pointed beard in Fig. 1 with the curly beard in Fig. 3, the sparse beard in Fig. 4, and the rounded beard in Fig. 5. If an original *Sacra Parallela* was illustrated with portraits of John of Damascus at Mar Saba (either during

*Parallela* could have been produced in Mar Saba around 800 (roughly half a century after John's death—for the dating of which see *ODB* 2:1063).

<sup>38</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 6, 9 (see figs. 2–7 and the unnumbered color plate at the beginning of the illustrations, for close-ups of the miniatures). It is possible but not certain that the painter intended to depict John of Damascus as the compiler. This identification is based on the similarities that Weitzmann saw between the various compiler portraits and a portrait of John of Damascus found next to one of his few excerpts included in our *Sacra Parallela* copy. The problem with this identification is that the compiler's portraits are not identical to each other, as I shall soon discuss, and they bear generic similarities not only to John of Damascus but to other eponymous monks depicted elsewhere in the manuscript. Compare *ibid.*, figs. 2–7 (compiler), 479 (John of Damascus), 591–92 (Cassian), 612 (Diadochus), 725 (Maximus the Confessor), and so on.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>40</sup> In three cases (stoicheia Γ, Ζ, Ι) the compiler is depicted right next to the relevant first title of the chapter. In the cases of stoicheia Ε and Ν the title appears in the interior column of text, so the compiler is distanced from it by the second column of text, but in the case of stoicheion

Ν he is represented on the same level as the title (whereas in the case of stoicheion Ε the compiler is shown somewhat lower than the title). In the case of stoicheion Ω he appears at the lower part of the page, looking upward toward the title.

<sup>41</sup> Weitzmann (*ibid.*, 31–32) assumed that the speaking and writing gestures were combined because the model would have contained a teaching scene, and since the *Sacra Parallela* artist wanted to present the compiler as author, he added the pen but did not adjust his images adequately. There is no compelling reason to assume such a model, and the attention to detail that the *Sacra Parallela* miniaturist often shows (as will become apparent in the following pages) suggests that he intentionally combined the speaking and writing gestures. After all, he was perfectly able to depict a hand holding a pen, if his intention was always to present the compiler only as author (see Fig. 1).

<sup>42</sup> A. Grabar, *Les Miniatures du Grégoire de Nazianze de l'Ambrosienne* [Ambrosianus E 49–50] (Paris, 1943).

his own time or later), it would be reasonable to expect a degree of consistency in his depiction. Besides, there is no reason to assume that the compiler's portrait should be represented at the beginning of every stoicheion, since these twenty-four chapters are included in the same codex and not in twenty-four different codices or rolls that might require the compiler's portrait at their beginning.<sup>43</sup> As Weitzmann himself suggested, such a portrait was perhaps inserted at the beginning of the Paris manuscript, which is now lacking several initial folios.<sup>44</sup> Within the codex, the priority of the miniaturist was to repeat not the compiler's figure but those of the authors of the excerpted passages.<sup>45</sup> Some 1,250 such portraits still survive in the codex, but originally they must have numbered around 1,380.<sup>46</sup> As Leslie Brubaker has observed, in many cases the authors look or even gesture toward their excerpts, as if to authenticate them, as if to assure the reader that the passages are genuine quotations from their works.<sup>47</sup> So, what was at stake in our manuscript was not so much the authorship of the compilation (probably declared in the initial title and portrait of the codex), but its validity and moral status, based on the use of genuine biblical and patristic sources, authenticated by the hundreds of portraits which illustrate them. It is not surprising, then, that at the beginning of most stoicheia we find not the compiler's portrait but author portraits corresponding to the compiled passages.

Perhaps it is more meaningful to ask why the compiler is depicted at the beginning of certain stoicheia and

not others, than to claim that he should be depicted in all of them and that failure to do so constitutes a copying mistake. The specific titles which the compiler looks at in the beginning of six stoicheia present themes important to any Byzantine Christian, but perhaps especially important to monks:<sup>48</sup>

Stoicheion Γ (Fig. 1): ΠΕΡΙ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΓΕΩΡΓΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΟΤΙ ΚΑΛΟΝ ΤΟ ΕΡΓΑΖΕCΘΑΙ.<sup>49</sup> "On farming and farmers and that working is good." In an agricultural society like Byzantium, the well-being and prosperity of the community was greatly dependent on the well-being and productivity of its farmers. Moreover, the admonition that working is good was especially important in a monastic environment, where manual labor was not only a practical but also a spiritual necessity.<sup>50</sup> The compiler, who is here dressed as a monk and is depicted as if writing the title on the folio, is holding a case with his writing implements. This detail, unique among the compiler's portraits, perhaps was intended to emphasize his writing activity, to present him as a hard-working author setting a good example for his readers. The first excerpt to appear under this title is from Genesis 3:23, where it is said that "God expelled Adam from the paradise of abundance, so that he would work the earth from which he was made."<sup>51</sup> Monks have to labor intensively on that very earth before they can leave their earthly body behind and re-enter paradise. In the last excerpts compiled under the same title, John Chrysostom declares that all useful things are earned by humankind with great toil and labor; he adds that it is a pleasure to

43 Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 14) used as comparative material in support of his hypothesis cod. Ambrosianus E 49–50 inf. of the ninth century, where he claimed that the portrait of Gregory Nazianzenus appears in front of almost all of his 45 homilies included in this codex. In reality, the miniatures he mentioned are teaching scenes, which often include either figures specifically identified as members of the audience to which this precise homily was addressed or biblical figures mentioned in the homilies, so they are much more than simple author portraits. See, for example, the miniatures on pages 119 and 354; Grabar, *Grégoire de l'Ambrosienne*, plates XII, XXIX.

44 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 6.

45 It is possible that more than one miniaturist was involved in the illustration of this codex, but until this issue is systematically examined, I shall use the terms "artist," "painter," and the like in the singular. When I use the terms "creators" or "makers of the codex" I refer collectively to the scribe who copied the excerpted passages, the artist or artists illustrating the manuscript, and the person or persons who commissioned it.

46 According to Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 6, 11.

47 Brubaker, "Byzantine Art in the Ninth Century" (n. 11 above), 70–75, esp. 73–74; eadem, *Vision and Meaning* (n. 4 above), 52–57. Also noted by K. Corrigan, *Visual Polemics in the Ninth-Century Byzantine Psalter* (Cambridge, 1992), 118–19.

48 It is often suggested in the scholarly literature that Parisinus 923 was made in a monastery; see, for example, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 23; Carr, review of *Sacra Parallela* (n. 29 above), 148. For the major role of monasteries in the production of Byzantine codices, see N. Wilson, "Books and Readers in Byzantium," in *Byzantine Books and Bookmen: A Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium, 1971* (Washington, DC, 1975), 9.

49 Fol. 99r (PG 95:1308D, title V). All the texts from cod. Paris. gr. 923 are transcribed here with the abbreviated words written in full and with no attempt to edit the passages. Accents are omitted for practical reasons.

50 To mention just one characteristic example, the very first saying of the Fathers included in the *Apophthegmata Patrum* (PG 65:76A–B) proclaims the equal importance of prayer and labor in the daily life of a virtuous monk (in this case, Antony the Great). Many more passages in this collection mention the continuous occupation of monks with ἐργασίαι, manual tasks such as the weaving of baskets or mats.

51 Fol. 99r (PG 95:1308D). All the Old Testament quotations in this article (and in cod. Paris. gr. 923) are according to the Septuagint (numbered as in the Rahlfs ed.), unless otherwise noted. Translations into English are mine.

receive the fruits of a fertile land, but when a barren and rocky land is made to give fruits through intensive labor, then the farmer's joy is even greater, for he has conquered and tamed nature.<sup>52</sup> This is strongly reminiscent of a topos found in Byzantine texts concerned with the life of monks: the more hostile the natural environment is, the greater the spiritual achievement of the monks who settle there.<sup>53</sup>

Stoicheion E (Fig. 2): ΠΕΡΙ ΕΝΤΟΛΩΝ ΘΕΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΦΥΛΑΤΤΟΝΤΩΝ ΑΥΤΑς.<sup>54</sup> “On God's commandments and on those who follow them.” The importance of this title is self-evident for the moral agenda of any Christian compilation like the *Sacra Parallela* and is equally valid for all Christians. This is one of the two cases where the compiler is not clearly identified as a monk. Likewise, the first title under stoicheion Z is ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΕΠΙΖΗΤΕΙΝ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΥΤΩ ΕΠΕΣΘΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙ ΤΩ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑΠΡΑΤΤΕΙΝ (“About seeking God and following him and doing everything in his name”), but in this case the compiler is clearly identified as a monk (Fig. 3).<sup>55</sup>

Stoicheion I (Fig. 4): ΠΕΡΙ ΙΣΟΤΗΤΟΣ· ΟΤΙ Η ΙΣΟΤΗΣ ΦΙΛΑΔΕΛΦΙΑΣ ΕΣΤΙΝ ΜΗΤΗΡ ΤΑ ΠΡΟΣ ΑΞΙΑΝ ΕΚΑΚΤΩ ΝΕΜΟΥΣΑ.<sup>56</sup> “On equality, that equality is the mother of brotherly love, giving to everyone their worth.” Many of the excerpts in this title speak more about respect and honors due to authorities than about the equality of all human beings, but they also refer to the recognition of one's value.<sup>57</sup> Respect for authorities together with justice and love among brothers is especially important in a monastic community. The introduction of “brotherly love” (marked in Fig. 4) in the title is rather significant. It is absent from the same title in the *Sacra Parallela* edition in the *Patrologia Graeca*,<sup>58</sup> and



Fig. 1 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 99r, the compiler's portrait at the beginning of stoicheion Γ (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

it is not mentioned even in the passages compiled in our codex under the title discussed here. There is only a very brief passage attributed to Isidore of Pelusium, according to which injustice is alien to love,<sup>59</sup> but the title especially stresses brotherly love, a basic ingredient of healthy monastic institutions. It is perhaps no coincidence that next to this title the compiler is more emphatically identified as a monk than in any other of his portraits and, instead of a pen, he holds a cruciform staff that seems to present him as the abbot of a monastery, teaching obedience, fairness, and love to his brethren. The imposing figure of the compiler stands in front of an arch which merges with his figure and seems to transform him into a large iota,

rather than the first title of stoicheion I. However, the same title as in the *Sacra Parallela* (and even more extensive) appears first in the sequence of titles under stoicheion I in the Rupefucaldian recension: PG 96:453–56, “Περὶ ισότητος· ὅτι ισότης φιλαδελφίας ἐστὶ μήτηρ καὶ τροφός, ἐν τε τοῖς πνευματικοῖς, ἐν τε τοῖς σαρκικοῖς.”

<sup>59</sup> Fol. 208v (PG 96:60D, where the passage is attributed to Josephus).

<sup>52</sup> Fol. 99v (PG 95:1309BC).

<sup>53</sup> See, for example, *Apophthegmata Patrum*, PG 65:77A, where it is said that salvation cannot be attained without temptation. In other words, harsh conditions in the natural and spiritual environment are valuable tests that serve to reinforce one's virtuous character.

<sup>54</sup> Fol. 147r (PG 95:1416D).

<sup>55</sup> Fol. 197r. (In PG 95:1568C the title is slightly different, and in fact corresponds better to the relevant stoicheion Z, as it uses the word ζητεῖν rather than ἐπιζητεῖν found in cod. Paris. gr. 923).

<sup>56</sup> Fol. 208r (PG 96:60C, where the title is briefer).

<sup>57</sup> See PG 96:60CD, where the passages included under the same title are identical, save for some attributions to different authors.

<sup>58</sup> PG 96:60C (Vatican recension). Here the title is not only simpler (Περὶ ισότητος· καὶ ὅτι χρὴ τὰ πρὸς ἀξίαν νεμεῖν), it is also the fourth





**Fig. 2** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 147r, the compiler's portrait at the beginning of stoicheion E (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

the stoicheion of this chapter. That this visual allusion might have been intentional is suggested by the arch's decoration with the same twisted rope motif which in other cases decorates the capital letters marking the corresponding stoicheia (and on this folio there is no such letter; compare Figs. 2–3, 5–6). No other arch among the many architectural settings depicted in this codex is ever decorated with the same motif, which is used almost exclusively for the stoicheia marking the chapters of the

**60** The twisted rope motif is used in most surviving stoicheia: E, Z, N, O, Π, P, C, T, Υ, Φ, X, Ω; folios 147v, 197r, 240r, 31r (folio misplaced), 252r, 302v, 303v, 332r, 338r, 352v, 367v, 378v. This motif is not used in stoicheia Γ and Ψ, folios 99r and 374r (which have no decoration). The folio where stoicheion A would have been is now missing. Stoicheia H and Θ (fol. 25r, misplaced) are not depicted at all, and the same is true for stoicheia B, Δ, K, Λ, M, Ξ (fols. 88r, 116r, 214v, 224r, 228v, 245r). In only three other cases among the 1,658 miniatures of the codex is this motif used: once on a column of a building (fol. 231v) and twice on the

book.<sup>60</sup> Perhaps this visual presentation of the figure almost as a “personification” of the stoicheion iota was intended to emphasize that the compiler and abbot is the embodiment of ἰσότης (equality): he is the living image of the concept which he proclaims as the basis of brotherly love among the members of his monastic community.

Stoicheion N (Fig. 5): ΠΕΡΙ ΝΕΟΤΗΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΗΛΙΚΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΟΥ ΑΠΕΤΑΙ [ΑΥΤΟΙΣ?]. “On youth and young age and on those things which follow [them?].”<sup>61</sup> In this case the compiler, clearly identified as a monk, could be advising on

lectern depicted in front of St. Paul (fols. 253v, 304r); see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela* (n. 1 above), figs. 132, 515, 520.

**61** Fol. 240r (PG 96:185B). The last part of the title is illegible; the word “αὐτοῖς” is found in the PG edition of the text.

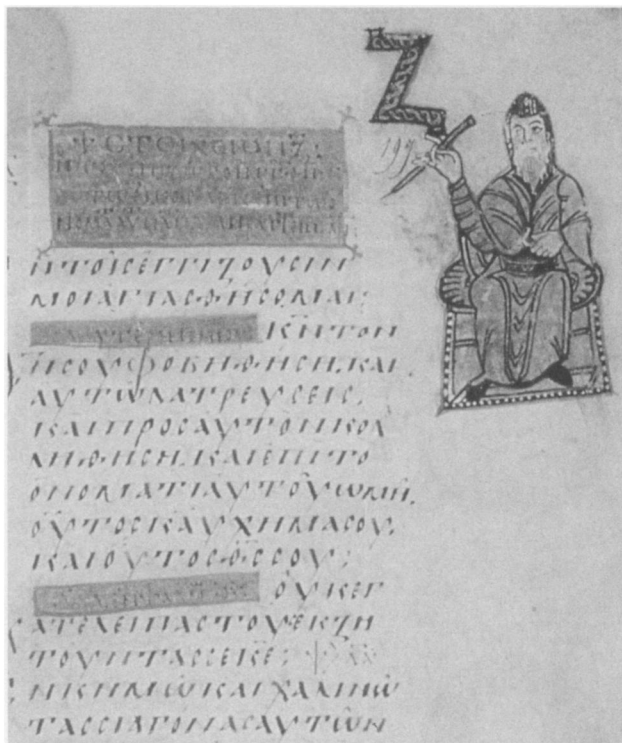


Fig. 3 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 197r, the compiler's portrait at the beginning of stoicheion Z (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

the important issue of how the younger members of a community, especially a monastic one, should behave: Follow God's will, obey the venerable elders, speak only when they are asked to, stop dreaming about wealth and glory, and try to combine their youthful physique with the wisdom of an old man.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> The passages compiled under this title are the same as in PG 96:185B–188B. Only one passage is dedicated to young girls (who must marry early in order to avoid the devil's temptations); all the other passages are concerned with young men or youth in general. The longest passage, by Basil the Great, describes how the young are inclined to imagine that they possess wealth, glory, and the like and are carried away by their own imagination. An elder in charge of youths should keep this in mind, in order to offer them proper guidance and support. As seen in the *Heavenly Ladder* by John Climax, the first step a monk has to make (and one of the most difficult in his path) is to distance himself from his previous mundane life and family, something especially hard for youths (see, for example, PG 88:641B–C).



Fig. 4 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 208r, the compiler's portrait at the beginning of stoicheion I (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France). Select parts of the manuscript, here and below, have been blanded to mark words discussed in this article.



Fig. 5 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 24or, the compiler's portrait at the beginning of stoicheion N (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

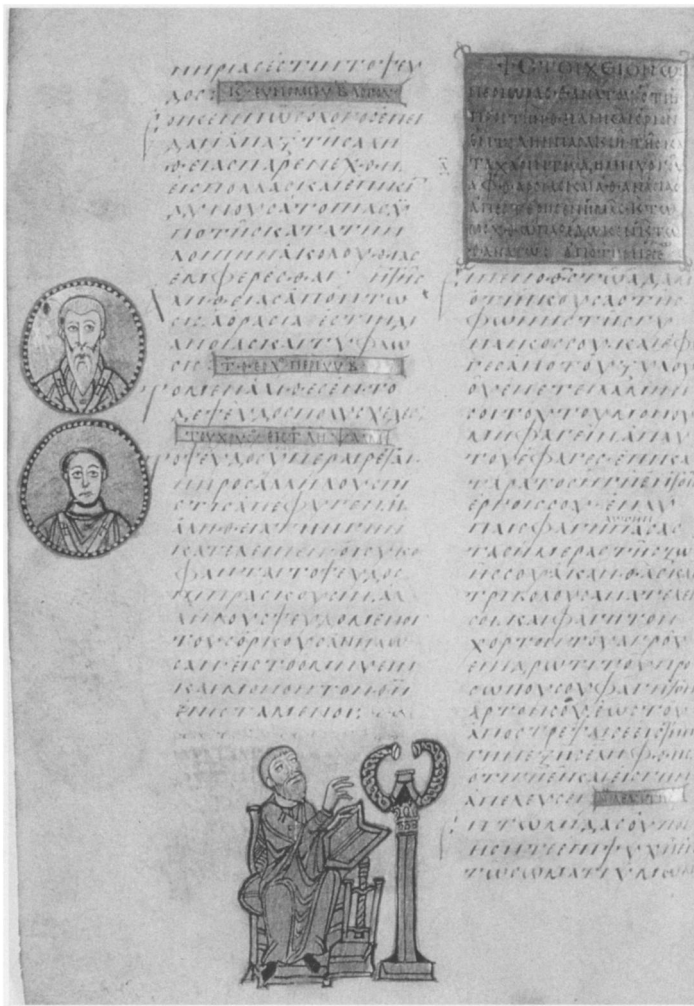


Fig. 6 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 378v, the compiler's portrait at the beginning of stoicheion Ω (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

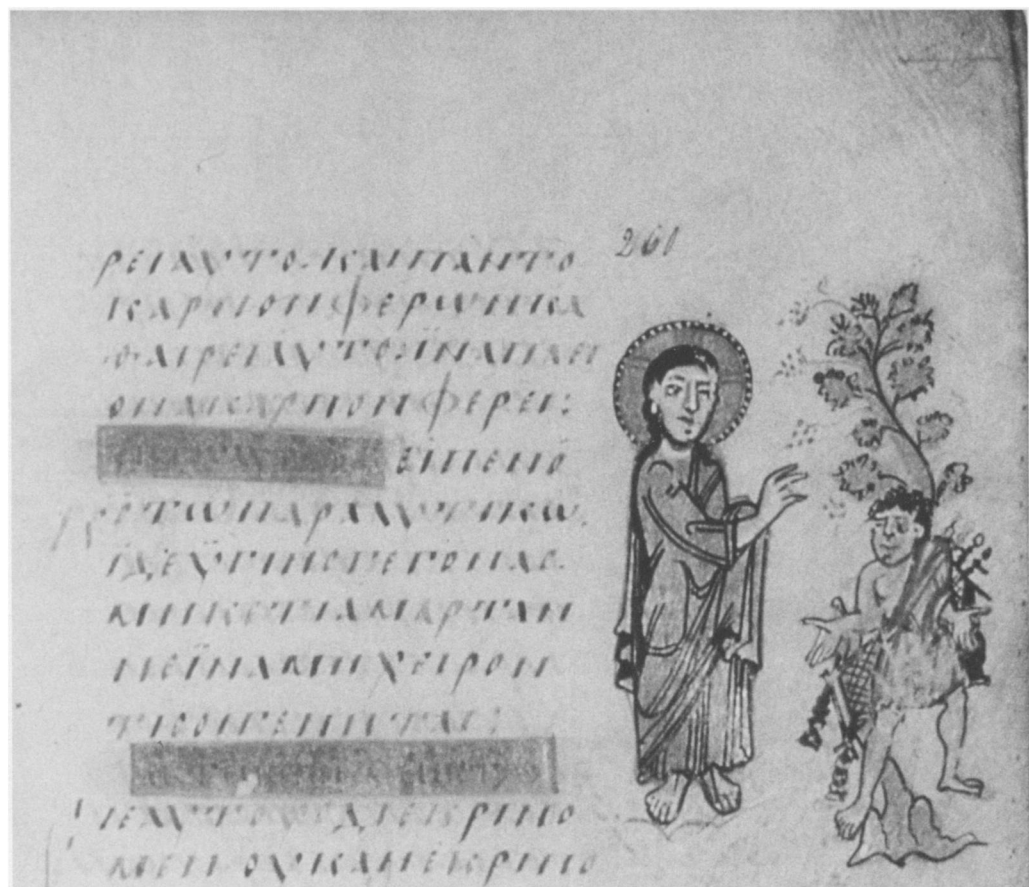
Stoicheion Ω (Fig. 6): ΠΕΡΙ ΩΡΑΣ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΥ. ΟΤΙ Η ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗΝ ΘΕΙΑΝ ΚΑΙ ΣΩΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΕΝΤΟΛΗΝ ΠΑΡΑΚΟΗ ΤΗΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΧΑΡΙΝ ΤΟΥ ΔΗΜΙΟΥΡΓΟΥ ΑΦΘΑΡΣΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΑΣ ΑΠΕΣΤΕΡΙCΕΝ ΗΜΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΩ ΜΟΧΘΩ ΠΑΡΕΔΩΚΕΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΩ ΘΑΝΑΤΩ.<sup>63</sup> “On the time of death, that disobedience to the divine and salvific command has taken away from us the incorruptibility and

immortality by the Creator’s grace and surrendered us to toil and death.” The compiler is once more not clearly identified as a monk. The time of death is a basic preoccupation of every human being, of every Christian, but perhaps especially of every monk, whose earthly life is a preparation for the afterlife. In this case the compiler holds a book inscribed CΤΟΙΧΕΙΟΝ Ω,<sup>64</sup> as he looks toward the omega on a pillar standing next to him, and beyond that to the relevant title. He seems about to close his book, as the *Sacra Parallela* compilation is also about to end, with admonitions on the one inescapable event which closes the book of one’s life.

Most of the titles introducing the other stoicheia of the codex refer either to vices that one must avoid (such

63 Fol. 378v. This title of cod. Paris. gr. 923 appears in identical fashion in the Rupefucaldian recension (PG 96:468A). Contrary to Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 30), the title exists also in the Vatican recension (PG 96:436B), but both the wording of the title and many of the passages compiled under it are different from the text in cod. Paris. gr. 923. Rather significantly, the emphasis on the connection between sin and death as presented in the title of the Paris codex (reference to the Fall in the title, first passage from Genesis 3:17–19) is missing from PG 96:436.

64 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 30.



**Fig. 7** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 260r, the true vine, Christ, and the paralytic of Bethesda (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

as blasphemy, slander, or drunkenness), or to abstract concepts such as teaching, hospitality, the family, or the soul.<sup>65</sup> These were probably less important to the creators (and maybe also the users) of the codex than the titles accompanied by the compiler's portrait. In other words, these portraits were probably used to highlight specific parts of the text. They are not remnants of a more extensively illustrated model, attesting to the negligence of a

copyist, but products of a creative process intended to promote the didactic value of the florilegium.

The same holds true, I believe, with regard to Weitzmann's second argument for the existence of a *Sacra Parallela* model. The argument develops around a miniature on folio 260r, which represents the healing of the paralytic of Bethesda narrated in John 15 in combination with the true vine mentioned in John 5 (Fig. 7). Weitzmann assumed that "such an error as the overlapping of two different pictorial items . . . can be explained only by the use of a model where the two items existed separately, but in rapid succession. This could not have been a Gospel book, since the items come from chapters which are far apart ([John] V and XV), but must have been another *Sacra Parallela* manuscript where the two passages happened to be on the same page."<sup>66</sup> In other words, Weitzmann hypothesized that in the original *Sacra Parallela*

<sup>65</sup> I give in translation a list of the titles which introduce the other stoicheia: A, missing. B, "On blasphemers and boasters." Δ, "On teaching and teachers." H, "On a good day." Θ, "On being cautious not to confide in others." K, "On time and that there is a proper time for everything." Λ, "On slander." M, "On drunkards and prodigals." Ξ, "On guests and hospitality." O, "On family and the household." Π, "On blameless behavior, pleasing to God." P, "On indolent and negligent people." C, "On relatives and that we must gladly accept the care of them." T, "On honor and that we must [ . . . ]." Υ, "On health and good physical condition." Φ, "On love of power." X, "On gifts." Ψ, "On the soul." For the relevant folios see n. 60.

<sup>66</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 14.



codex the true vine and the healing of the paralytic were depicted one after the other in separate compositions, and the copyist of our *Sacra Parallela* mistakenly combined them in one composition. This explanation would be acceptable if the vine appeared near the paralytic, but since in our case the plant is behind him, the explanation does not hold: a paratactic depiction of elements can be accidental, but this combination of images, which results in a complicated composition, can only be intentional. Furthermore, there is no indication that the vine tree was overpainted with the image of the paralytic (which could have been the case if the artist had represented the vine and then realized that in the same space he should also depict the paralytic); rather, the plant is painted outside the outline of the man's figure, and the two constitute a complex whole which was apparently carefully designed. While there is plenty of space in the margins to illustrate the vine next to its relevant passage and the healing separately and in proximity to its passage, the miniaturist chose to combine the two.

The reason becomes apparent if we examine the context and content of the two Gospel passages: they are compiled under the title on divine castigation and those who endure their sufferings with dignity.<sup>67</sup> In John 5:14 Christ, after healing the paralytic, tells him “now that you have become healthy, sin no more so that nothing worse happens to you.” In other words, the healing of this man was a divine reward for his virtuousness, but sickness could return as a divine castigation for sinfulness. The same message is transmitted in broader terms when Christ says in John 15:1–2 “I am the true vine and my father is the farmer. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he trims clean so that it will be even more fruitful.”<sup>68</sup> The

combination of the healed paralytic and the vine tree emphasizes in a very eloquent way the common moral message of the two passages: the paralytic had faith in God, since according to John's Gospel he had waited for many years to find his cure in the pool of Bethesda.<sup>69</sup> He was a worthy and fruitful branch of the true vine, which Christ cleansed, in other words healed, so that it could produce more fruit. If the man sinned in the future, he would be punished like the fruitless branches of the vine and be cast into the fire of physical and spiritual suffering. It should be noted that the use of flourishing and fruitful trees as symbols of virtue was very common in Byzantine literature but also known in art,<sup>70</sup> as we see, for example, in two well-known miniatures of the ninth-century Chludov Psalter, where trees grow from the heads of Charity and the charitable man, illustrating Psalms 36:26 and 111:9 respectively (cf. Fig. 8).<sup>71</sup> In both

69 According to John 5:5–6, the man was paralyzed for 38 years and had waited for a long time in the pool of Bethesda, hoping to be healed. The exemplary patience of the paralytic is warmly praised by Byzantine authors as a sign of spiritual valor, for example, by John Chrysostom (PG 48:805–6), Theophylaktos of Ochrid (PG 123:1260BC), and Euthymios Zigabenos (PG 129:1208CD).

70 Such metaphors (and their opposite, the assimilation of sinfulness to barren plants and weeds) are commonly used in the Bible, whence the tradition is transmitted into patristic literature. See, for example, Psalm 1:3, Sirach 24:13–17, 50:8, 10, 12, Matthew 3:8, 10, 12, 12:33, 13:4–8, 18–43, 15:13, 20:1, Mark 4, Luke 3:8–9, 6:43–44, 8:5–15, 13:6–9, 18–19, John 12:24, 15:1–9, 16. For two very characteristic examples of a virtuous man described as a fruitful tree or a flourishing vine, see *Apophthegmata Patrum* (PG 65:112AB, 168B). For some references to the Cross as the Tree of Life and other plant metaphors in Christian art and literature, see C. Leonardi, *Ampelos: Il simbolo della vite nell'arte pagana e paleocristiana* (Rome, 1947); D. Talbot Rice, “The Leaved Cross,” *Byzantinoslavica* 11 (1950): 68–81; P. Underwood, “The Fountain of Life in Manuscripts of the Gospels,” *DOP* 5 (1950): 41–137, esp. 97–103; J. Daniélou, “La vigne et l'arbre de vie,” *Les symboles chrétiens primitifs* (Paris, 1961), 33–63; G. B. Ladner, “Die spätantike und frühchristliche Natursymbolik und Naturkunde,” *Handbuch der frühchristlichen Symbolik* (Stuttgart–Zürich, 1992), 113–49, esp. 138–43; H. Maguire, “Imperial Gardens and the Rhetoric of Renewal,” in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th Centuries, Papers from the Twenty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St Andrews, March 1992*, ed. P. Magdalino (Cambridge, 1994), 181–98; M. Evangelatou, entry on cod. 211 of the National Library of Greece, in *Byzantium: An Oecumenical Empire*, exh. cat., ed. M. Evangelatou, E. Papastavrou, and P. Skotti (Athens, 2002), cat. no. 38, esp. pp. 108–9; A. G. Mantas, “The Iconographic Subject ‘Christ the Vine’ in Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art,” *Δεχτ. Χριστ. Αρχ.Ετ.* 24, no. 4 (2003): 347–60. For a comprehensive study of the symbolism of plants in medieval art (mostly of the West), see M. Schmidt, *Warum ein Apfel, Eva? Die Bildsprache von Baum, Frucht und Blume* (Regensburg, 2000).

71 See E. Antonopoulos, “Miséricorde, Olivier: Agents et attributs,” *Byzantion* 51 (1981): 345–85. For images of this Psalter's illustration (cod.

67 Fol. 256v: ΠΕΡΙ ΠΑΙΔΙΑΣ ΠΑΡΑ ΘΕΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΕΥΧΑΡΙ[CTΩC ΚΑΙ] ΕΥΤΕΝΩC ΔΕΧΟΜΕΝΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΦΕΡΟΝΤΩΝ ΤΑ ΕΠΕΡΧΟΜΕΝΑ. The same title appears in the Rupefucaldian recension, PG 96:460. In the Vatican recension, PG 96:312D, the title is briefer (“Περὶ παιδείας Θεοῦ, καὶ τῶν εὐγενῶς φερόντων”), and the passages on the true vine and the paralytic are omitted.

68 The two passages from John are written in the codex as follows (starting from the bottom of the first column of text and continuing in the second column of text): [John 15:1–2] ΕΙΠΕΝ Κ(ΥΡΙΟ)C. ΕΓΩ ΕΙΜΙ / Η ΑΜΠΕΛΟC Η ΑΛΗΘΙ/ΝΗ ΚΑΙ Ο Π(ΑΤ)ΗΡ ΜΟΥ / Ο ΓΕΩΡΓΟC ΕCΤΙ. ΠΑΝ / ΚΛΗΜΑ ΕΝ ΕΜΟΙ ΜΗ / ΦΕΡΩΝ ΚΑΡΠΟΝ ΑΙ//ΡΕΙ ΑΥΤΟ. ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝ ΤΟ / ΚΑΡΠΟΝ ΦΕΡΩΝ ΚΑ//ΘΑΙΡΕΙ ΑΥΤΟ. ΙΝΑ ΠΛΕΙ/ΟΝ ΚΑΡΠΟΝ ΦΕΡΕΙ: [John 5:14] ΕΚ ΤΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΥ. ΕΙΠΕΝ Ο / Κ(ΥΡΙΟ)C ΤΩ ΠΑΡΑΛΥΤΙΚΩ. / ΙΔΕ ΥΓΙΗC ΓΕΓΟΝΑC. / ΜΗΚΕΤΙ ΑΜΑΡΤΑΝ/ΝΕ (sic) ΙΝΑ ΜΗ ΧΕΙΡΟΝ / ΤΙ ΟΙ ΓΕΝΗΤΑΙ:

miniatures, the virtuous figure becomes the fruitful tree, as if to illustrate literally his description in Psalm 1:3 as “a tree planted by the brooks of waters, which shall yield its fruit in its season, and its leaf shall not fall off.” In the *Sacra Parallela* miniature, the vine is growing not from the body of the paralytic but behind it, so that the words of the Gospel are more accurately reflected: the man standing in front of the vine seems attached to it, like a real branch of the plant. Far from being a copying mistake proving the existence of a lost *Sacra Parallela* model, this miniature demonstrates the effort of the miniaturist to capture the spirit of the texts he illustrated. Similar cases of visual exegesis can be observed in some of the other miniatures I shall examine next.

Accordingly, there is no proof for the use of an illustrated *Sacra Parallela* model in the production of Parisinus graecus 923. If such a manuscript ever existed, we cannot prove it. On the other hand, is there proof for



Fig. 8 Chludov Psalter, fol. 116r, a charitable man gives alms to the poor (photo courtesy of the State Historical Museum)

the use of at least seventeen illustrated model books from which almost all the miniatures of the Paris codex were copied?<sup>72</sup> Before reviewing Weitzmann’s main arguments in support of this model theory in the last section of this article, I shall investigate the close synergy between text and image in Parisinus 923 from a number of different perspectives.

## Attention to Detail

The miniatures selected for examination in this section demonstrate the attentive work of the *Sacra Parallela* painter; more specifically, they indicate that he opted for iconographic and/or compositional details that would serve the didactic message of the illustrated passages in their florilegium context.

A miniature that vividly exemplifies this approach appears on folio 387r (Fig. 9). Here the half-figures of Peter and a woman (at bottom) illustrate a passage by John Chrysostom in which Christ’s miraculous cure of the apostle’s mother-in-law is mentioned as proof of the fact that Peter was married. Chrysostom uses Peter’s example to teach his audience that even married people can be virtuous and find salvation in Christ. He writes: “Even the pillar of the Church, Peter, had a wife. And from where is this obvious? I shall prove it through the testimony of the Evangelist. For he says ‘The Lord came to Peter’s mother-in-law, and she was ill, and he touched her and the fever left her, so she rose up and started serving him.’ So you see that even Peter had a wife.”<sup>73</sup> The

129 of the State Historical Museum in Moscow) see its facsimile edition by M.V. Ščepkina, *Miniatjury Khlyudovskoi Psaltiri* (Moscow, 1977), or the new facsimile, *Salterio Chludov* ([Madrid], 2006).

72 Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 358–62) concluded that the following illustrated books were used as models: Octateuch, Kings and Chronicles, Psalter with Odes, Job, Books of Wisdom, Prophets, Four Gospels and Lectionary, Epistles, Homilies of Basil the Great (two or more different collections of homilies), Homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus, Homilies of John Chrysostom (an unknown number of books with different homilies), *Apophthegmata Patrum*, *Antiquitates Judaicae* and *Bellum Judaicum* by Josephus. Ibid., 205–10, he also mentioned an illustrated book *On the Characteristics of Animals* by Claudius Aelianus—for which see below, pp. 159–62.

73 (The text is very similar in PG 96:145A, with only minor differences). ΙΔΕ ΜΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΠΕΤΡΟΝ / ΤΟΝ ΣΤΥΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΕΚ/ΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΟΤΙ ΚΑΙ ΑΥΤΟΣ / ΓΥΝΑΙΚΑ ΕΙΧΕΝ. ΚΑΙ / ΠΟΘΕΝ ΔΗΛΟΝ ΟΤΙ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΑ ΕΙΧΕΝ ΕΚ ΤΗΣ / ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΗΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΑΣ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΑΠΟΔΕΙΞΟ/ΜΕΝ. ΦΗΣΙ ΓΑΡ Ο ΚΥΡΙΟΣ / ΕΙΧΛΑΘΕΝ



figures of Peter and the woman are painted right next to this last part of the text, where the writer emphatically asserts that “even Peter had a wife,” so the miniature could be showing the apostle’s wife rather than his mother-in-law.<sup>74</sup> In any case, the miniaturist did not abbreviate here the well-known scene of the miraculous healing of Peter’s mother-in-law,<sup>75</sup> but chose to paint the apostle next to a female figure (either his mother-in-law or his wife) in order to emphasize his married state, exactly as Chrysostom writes in his text. In the same passage, right before mentioning Peter, John Chrysostom writes that, although Moses was married and Elijah chaste, they were both equally able to perform miracles, the first bringing manna and quails to the Israelites and the second fire upon their enemies.<sup>76</sup> These two miracles are also depicted right above Peter (Fig. 9, top). It is worth noting that behind Moses the painter has depicted a woman wearing the same headdress as the woman behind Peter. Probably she is Moses’ wife. Next to her, a male figure represents the Israelites who witnessed the miracle.<sup>77</sup> The visual message of the miniatures on this folio of the *Sacra Parallela* clearly reflects Chrysostom’s message to his readers: Moses and Peter are each accompanied by a woman, while the virginal Elijah stands alone; however, they are all holy men, as is indicated by Peter’s halo and by the miracles performed by the two Old Testament figures.

The miraculous healing of Peter’s mother-in-law is mentioned a second time in Parisinus 923, and this time it is illustrated, since the miracle per se, and not Peter’s marriage, is the focus of attention. On folio 211r, Christ is shown holding by the wrist Peter’s mother-in-law, who seems about to rise from her bed (Fig. 10).<sup>78</sup> This miniature illustrates Matthew 8:14–15, which is one of the

ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΠΙΝ/ΘΕΡΑΝ ΠΕΤΡΟΥ, ΚΑΙ ΗΝ/ΑΡΡΩΣΤΟΥΣΑ, ΚΑΙ  
 ΗΨΑ/ΤΟ ΑΥΤΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΦΥΓΕ / Ο ΠΥΡΕΤΟΣ. ΚΑΙ ΑΝΕCΤΗ  
 / ΚΑΙ ΔΙΗΚΟΝΕΙ ΑΥΤΩ./ ΟΡΑC ΟΤΙ ΚΑΙ Ο ΠΕΤΡΟΣ ΓΥ/  
 ΝΑΙΚΑ ΕΙΧΕΝ.

74 The phrase “ΟΡΑC ΟΤΙ ΚΑΙ ΠΕΤΡΟΣ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΑ ΕΙΧΕΝ” has a large initial Ο, which stands out from the rest of the column text (highlighted in Fig. 9). This emphasizes both the argument of the text and the act of seeing, itself reinforced by the painted figures.

75 As suggested by Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 172.

76 See PG 96:144D–145A.

77 The hypothesis that the female figure was specifically intended to emphasize Moses’ married state might be supported by the fact that in other depictions of the miracle of the quail and manna, as on folios 76v and 107r of the ninth-century Chludov Psalter, only male Israelites are represented. See the facsimile edition by Ščepkina, *Miniatury Khlu-dovskoi Psaltiri* (n. 71 above).

78 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 409.

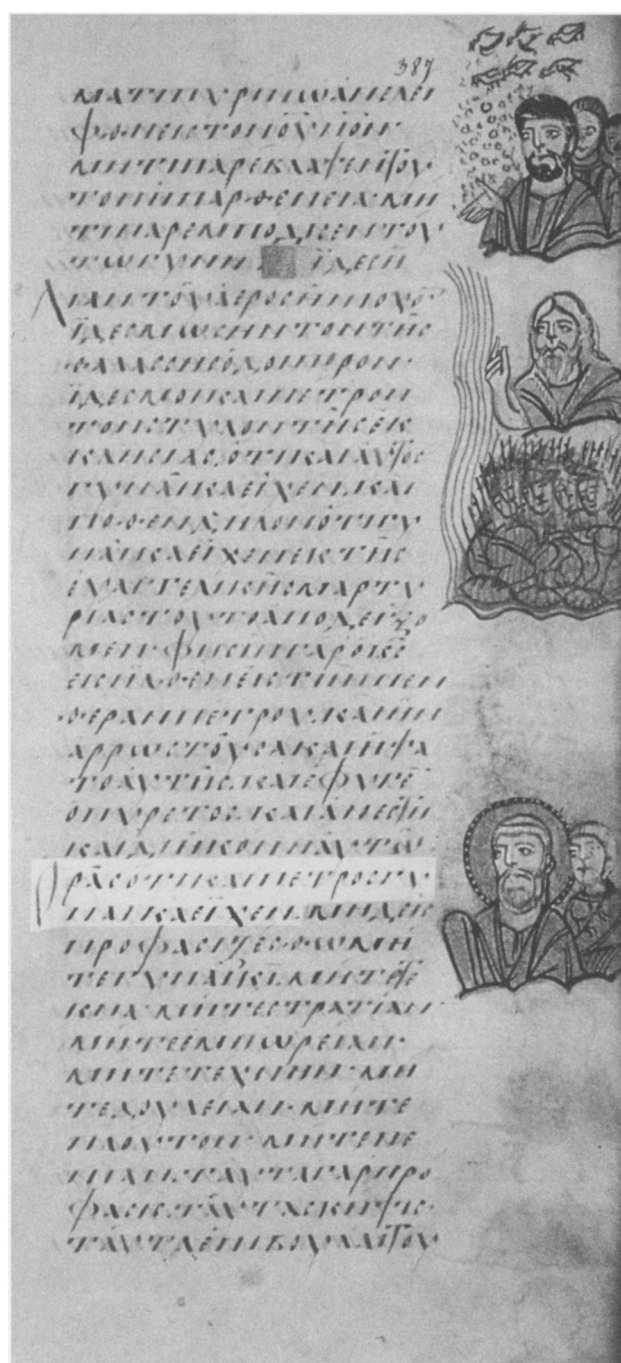


Fig. 9 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 387r, Moses and the miracle of manna and quails, Elijah and the miracle of heavenly fire, and St. Peter and his wife or mother-in-law (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 10** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 211r, Christ heals Peter's mother-in-law (courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

passages compiled under the title ΠΕΡΙ ΙΑΜΑΤΩΝ ΥΠΟ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ ΓΕΝΟΜΕΝΩΝ ("On healings performed by the Lord and the prophets and the apostles").<sup>79</sup> In total, nineteen healing miracles of Christ are depicted next to Gospel passages compiled under this title.<sup>80</sup> Usually, only Christ and the sick person or persons healed by him are

<sup>79</sup> Fol. 210v (the title is visible in Weitzmann, *ibid.*, fig. 177). In PG 96:52C the apostles are not mentioned in the title, although passages referring to their miracles are compiled in the text (PG 96:57BC).

<sup>80</sup> Fols. 211r–212v. The miracles depicted are the following. Fol. 211r: healing of a leper; the centurion's servant; Peter's mother-in-law; two blind men. Fol. 211v: healing of a deaf man; the man with a withered hand; a multitude of sick; a multitude of lame, blind, and deaf; the lunatic; two blind men in Jericho. Fol. 212r: healing of the man born blind; Jairus's daughter and the woman with the issue of blood (two different miracles illustrated in one composition); the bent woman; a demoniac. Fol. 212v: healing of the paralytic of Capernaum; the man possessed by a legion of demons; a deaf-mute and a blind man (two different Gospel episodes illustrated in one composition). The miracles mentioned in cod. Paris. gr. 923 also appear under the same title in PG 96:54A–57A. In the case of two of these miracles (the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter and the healing of the paralytic of Bethesda), the reference in Paris.

shown.<sup>81</sup> In four cases, the few additional figures depicted next to Christ and the sick person seem to have been inspired by the artist's attentive reading of the passages he wanted to illustrate: thus, the centurion is represented next to his servant, because the former's faith in Christ led to the healing of the latter, as is clearly stated in the relevant Gospel passage.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, the lunatic's father is represented beseeching Christ, because it was through his intervention that the boy was healed.<sup>83</sup>

The scene where Christ is depicted talking to Jairus, while the woman with the issue of blood touches the hem of his garment, is the only one of the nineteen compositions in which the artist has depicted a crowd (Fig. 11). This is not only because ΟΙ ΟΧΛΟΙ (the crowds) are mentioned in the relevant Gospel passage.<sup>84</sup> They are

gr. 923 is not complete; it simply identifies the event and then ends with "ΚΑΙ ΤΑ ΛΟΙΠΑ" ("etc."). These are the only two episodes not illustrated in cod. Paris. gr. 923, apparently because of lack of space on the folio (the references are so brief and take up so few lines that they do not create adequate space for their illustration, since other miracles which are described in lengthier passages occupy the margins). It can also be hypothesized that at least the miracle with the Canaanite woman was abbreviated in the text and not illustrated at all because it is extensively mentioned and illustrated in fols. 166v–170r (see below, pp. 184–86). The miracle of the paralytic of Bethesda is also illustrated later on (fol. 260r), but it is unlikely that the painter knew he would have to depict it on one of the following folios and so chose to omit it on fol. 212r.

<sup>81</sup> See Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 408 (upper scene), 409, 411–12, 425, 435, 443, 445, 447 (upper scene), 462, 480. Weitzmann considered this the result of the artist's abbreviation of the miniatures he was using as models. However, it can equally well be hypothesized that the artist simply represented the protagonists of the episodes narrated in the adjacent passages without necessarily resorting to models. See *ibid.*, 163, 164, 168, 169, 172, 174, 182. Contrary to Weitzmann's claim (*ibid.*, 172), the healing of the paralytic of Capernaum on fol. 212v corresponds to the information given in the excerpted passage (which includes Mark 2:11, where Christ orders the paralytic to arise and pick up his bed, as he is seen doing in the miniature).

<sup>82</sup> Matthew 8:5–8. In PG 95:53B the passage is longer (Matthew 8:5–9). The miniature is on fol. 211r; see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 408 (lower scene).

<sup>83</sup> Matthew 17:14–15, PG 95:56A. The miniature is on fol. 211v; see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 428.

<sup>84</sup> Luke 8:42. The miniature is on fol. 212r. In *Roll and Codex* (n. 21 above), 116, Weitzmann described the addition of the crowd in this scene as the painter's inopportune attempt to copy his model closely, while he assumed that in the previous and following miniatures the same painter chose to depict a more abbreviated version of his model miniatures, realizing that the margins of his codex would not allow him to paint very detailed scenes. In *Sacra Parallela*, 174, Weitzmann noticed that the crowd is depicted in this miniature because it is mentioned in the text, but he did not relate that fact to the particulars of the story, nor did he comment why in other cases, where the crowd is also mentioned, the *Sacra Parallela* painter did not include it in the miniatures.

also mentioned in the passages narrating the healing of the leper and of the multitude of sick, which in the *Sacra Parallela* are illustrated with miniatures that include just Christ and the infirm, with no crowd next to them (Fig. 14).<sup>85</sup> Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the artist chose to depict the crowd only in the episode of the healing of the woman with the issue of blood because only in that miracle did the crowd play a significant role: its presence helped to prove the great faith of the woman who approached Christ, convinced that by touching him alone she would be healed. Although many people were pressing upon Christ, he sensed only her touch, for he felt his energy flowing to her, attracted by her great faith. This contrast between the many people pressing upon Christ and the woman's special touch was emphasized in the Gospel narrative (Luke 8:42–48) and was certainly well known to every Byzantine reader of the *Sacra Parallela*, who would immediately pick up on the particular meaning of the crowd depicted in the episode under discussion. In fact, this Gospel story was so well known that the scribe of our codex did not even bother to copy it all (as is also the case with other healing miracles mentioned under the same title).<sup>86</sup> He wrote only: ΕΝ ΔΕ ΤΩ ΥΠΑΓΕΙΝ ΑΥΤΟΝ ΟΙ ΟΧΛΟΙ ΣΥΝΕΠΙΝΙΘΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΓΥΝΗ ΟΥΚ ΑΝ ΠΥΘΕΙ ΑΙΜΑΤΟΣ ΑΠΟ ΕΤΩΝ ΙΒ' ΚΑΙ ΤΑ ΛΟΙΠΙΑ. ("As [Christ] was going [to the house of Jairus] the crowds were pressing upon him and a woman who was bleeding for twelve years, etc.")<sup>87</sup> Just as the reader did not have to read the whole Gospel excerpt dedicated to this miracle to know what happened, likewise the miniaturist did not have to use a richly illustrated model to know what to depict in his composition.<sup>88</sup> The fact that the miniaturist had to



Fig. 11 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 212r, Christ with Jairus and the woman with the issue of blood (courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

squeeze several figures behind Christ and the woman in order to depict a crowd in the narrow margin available further demonstrates how important it was for him to be faithful to the spirit of the Gospel episode he was illustrating. If his sole intention was to adjust his compositions to the width of the margin, he could easily have chosen not to include the crowd, as he does in the other two miracles where ΟΙ ΟΧΛΟΙ are also mentioned but are not essential to the story.

*to Seventh Century* (New York, 1979), 439, 446–48, cat. nos. 397, 407; and fols. 18r and 71v of the 11th-century cod. Laur. VI, 23, T. Velmans, *Le Tétraévangile de la Laurentienne, Florence, Laur. VI, 23*, Bibliothèque des Cahiers archéologiques 6 (Paris, 1971), 24, 35–36, figs. 30, 142. See Walter, "Gregory of Nazianzen's Homilies" (n. 16 above), 203–4, for some observations on the term "conflation" used by Weitzmann for combinations of different scenes in one composition. It seems to me that this term has acquired a rather negative connotation (implying an uncritical combination of elements), so perhaps its use should be restricted to cases where it is certain that the artist has combined elements that do not make sense together or are repetitive.

85 Matthew 8:1 and 15:30 respectively. The miniatures are on folios 211r and 211v respectively; see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 408 (upper scene), 425.

86 See n. 80, above.

87 The text is slightly different in PG 96:56B.

88 Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 174) assumed a richly illustrated model from which the *Sacra Parallela* painter "conflated" many scenes in a somewhat inaccurate fashion. However, from the early Christian period onward the most widespread representation of the healing of this woman was a composition in which she kneels or bends behind Christ to touch his cloak. (Consequently, there is no reason to assume the "conflation" of two scenes, where the woman first touches Christ's cloak and then kneels in front of him, as Weitzmann hypothesized.) For a few random examples of this iconography see the wall painting of the second quarter of the fourth century in the Roman catacomb of Santi Marcellinus and Petrus; the Roman ivory plaque of around 410–20 now in the Musée du Louvre, *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third*



**Fig. 12** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 212v, Christ heals a blind and a deaf man (courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

Likewise, in the last miniature depicting Christ's healing miracles in this part of the codex (Fig. 12), the miniaturist carefully illustrated in one composition two separate miracles, the healing of the deaf-mute and the healing of the blind man, which are mentioned one after the other in the *Sacra Parallela* text:<sup>89</sup> in the foreground he showed two figures leading a blind man to Christ, who touches his eyes in order to heal them; and behind them he represented the deaf-mute. Although both Gospel passages mention that others were leading the infirm men to Christ, the painter chose to include escorts solely in the case of the blind man, probably because in comparison to the deaf-mute he was in greater need of assistance to find his way to Christ.

Worthy of note is the detailed manner in which the painter characterized the infirm in some of the healing

miracles contained in these folios. In the miniature just discussed (Fig. 12), the blind man is clearly identified by his closed eyes, while the deaf-mute has wavy locks of hair that perhaps were intended to suggest he was possessed by a demon who caused his infirmity.<sup>90</sup> This is not mentioned in the relevant Gospel passage (Mark 7:34–35), but could have been inspired by Matthew 9:32–33, where a man identified as deaf and possessed by a demon is healed by Christ and is able to talk again (so he was also deaf-mute before the miracle).<sup>91</sup> This episode is mentioned and illustrated on folio 211v of codex Parisinus 923, when the specific reference of the text to possession is clearly reflected in the miniature, through the depiction of a demon who is shown leaving the man (Fig. 13). One of the demon's legs touches the man's right ear, as if the evil spirit has just jumped out, allowing the man to regain his hearing. In this case the deaf-mute is depicted with short prickly hair, probably intended as a sign of demonic possession.<sup>92</sup> The painter used the same type of hair to identify the deaf man in another miniature on the same folio (Fig. 14), illustrating the healing of "the lame, blind, deaf, and crippled" (Matthew 15:30).<sup>93</sup> In this case, the lame and crippled are represented in the miniature by the first man of the group: he is leaning on a staff and has a rather contorted body. The curious way his left leg is lifted and bent was perhaps inspired by the textual reference not only to ΧΩΛΟΥΣ (lame) but also ΚΥΛΛΟΥΣ: the latter means not simply crippled, but crooked, with legs bent outwards.<sup>94</sup> The second figure represents the blind men mentioned in the text: his eyes are clearly closed. The last man has the same prickly hair as the deaf-mute depicted on the same page (Fig. 13), so he probably is meant to represent the deaf people healed by Christ. In other words, the artist used the same convention, prickly or wavy hair, to identify the three deaf people depicted on folios 212v and 211v (Figs. 12–14), a

<sup>90</sup> If his locks were longer, they would resemble the Medusa-like hair of the Canaanite woman's possessed daughter on fol. 167r, Fig. 63.

<sup>91</sup> See the text in PG 96:53C. In this case, as in many others, the New International Version of the Gospels is very different from the Greek original (in the English, the man is identified as mute instead of deaf).

<sup>92</sup> Compare the prickly hair that characterizes the demon and the demoniac respectively in two other exorcism miracles, on fols. 212r and 212v (Mark 1:23–25 and 5:1–13); see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 443 and 447 (upper scene).

<sup>93</sup> See PG 96:53D–55A.

<sup>94</sup> Liddell-Scott, s.v. κυλλός.

<sup>89</sup> Mark 7:34–35, Mark 8:22 (PG 96:57A). The miniature is on fol. 212v. Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 172–73) thought that the miniaturist mistakenly conflated here separate episodes from the healing of the deaf-mute man: "no fewer than four people approach Christ, two of whom most likely represent the deaf-mute, first approaching Christ and then being healed by Christ's actually touching his ear. . . ."



**Fig. 13** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 211v, Christ heals a deaf-mute possessed by a demon (courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 14** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 211v, Christ heals the crippled, blind and deaf (courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

convention probably based on the idea that deafness is caused by demonic possession.<sup>95</sup>

The above examples indicate that the painter was not only paying attention to details of the passages he was illustrating, but was also elaborating on them (for example, assuming a connection between deafness and demonic possession even when it is not mentioned in the text, probably reflecting widespread ideas of his period). He also seems to elaborate when he illustrates Matthew 14:35–36 (Fig. 15), again on folio 211v, just above the healing of the crippled, blind, and deaf. The text mentions that “they brought all the sick to him [Christ]. And they begged him to let them [the sick] just touch the edge of his cloak. And all who touched him were healed.” Weitzmann attentively observed that the painter has depicted only women in the relevant miniature, although the text does not specify the gender of the sick, whereas in the Florentine Gospels, codex Laurentianus VI. 23, only men are depicted.<sup>96</sup> Perhaps, because of the reference



**Fig. 15** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 211v, Christ heals a multitude (courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

<sup>95</sup> This idea is not uncommon in Byzantine hagiographic texts. One characteristic example (out of many) can be found in the *Vita Tychonis*, pp. 31:17–36:5 (pages refer to the manuscript containing the text), ed. H. Usener, *Der heilige Tychon, Sonderbare Heilige 1* (Leipzig, 1907).

<sup>96</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 166.



to touching Christ's cloak, the painter was reminded of the healing of the woman with the issue of blood and decided to depict only women, one of whom is shown behind Christ, in similar pose and attire to the woman with the issue of blood depicted on the facing folio (the main difference being that the latter is indeed touching Christ's cloak; compare Figs. 11 and 15).

In the series of miracles discussed here, the detailed characterization of different infirmities might have been intended to stress that Christ's power can indeed heal all kinds of physical sufferings that befall people of all ages and both sexes (as the healing of the lunatic boy and the woman with the issue of blood remind the viewer). This was perhaps intended as a hopeful message to the readers of the text, who themselves might have been suffering from physical distress and, through a reminder of God's healing power, might have been encouraged to seek help by praying to God or resorting to a holy man or woman. This is of course a hypothesis that cannot be proven, but one may wonder whether the compiler of the florilegium had similar intentions when he brought together biblical references to healing miracles. Was he only interested in producing an encyclopedic catalogue of such miracles, or did he intend to give a message of hope and faith to the suffering men and women who would read his compilation?

Whatever the reason, the painter was certainly paying attention to details, although his miniatures do not always precisely reflect the exact wording of the text. For example, Weitzmann has acutely observed the following: on the one hand, the miniaturist depicted the two blind men mentioned in Matthew 9:27 as standing, because according to the text they were following Christ, crying for his help, while he showed the two blind men of Jericho seated, which accords with Matthew 20:30.<sup>97</sup> On the other hand, he depicted Christ making the speaking gesture in front of the leper, while according to Matthew 8:1–5 Jesus not only spoke to him but healed him by his touch.<sup>98</sup> Whether the painter was inattentive here or just chose to stress Christ's speaking rather than touching action, the majority of the cases prove that, intending to reflect in his images the essential components of the story, he read attentively the passages he was about to illustrate.

Another characteristic example of the painter's attention to detail is the depiction of animals which on

folio 198r illustrate passages from Job 38–39 compiled under the title “on irrational beasts adorned with natural wisdom” (Fig. 16).<sup>99</sup> In the lateral margin of the page, below Job's portrait, a horse, a hawk, a vulture, a raven, a deer, and a wild ass are depicted in the sequence in which they are mentioned in the compiled passages.<sup>100</sup> Certain iconographic details in the depiction of most of these animals indicate that the painter based his miniatures on a very careful reading of the text. For example, the hawk (Fig. 17) is described in the text as “spreading its wings, immobile and looking toward the south.”<sup>101</sup> Indeed, the hawk depicted in the miniature not only spreads its wings but also turns its head in the opposite direction from all the other animals, which look toward the text on the page. Perhaps this was done to indicate the southward direction toward which the bird is said to be looking, a detail that is not mentioned for any of the other animals. Similar depictions of predator birds (usually eagles) with outspread wings are very common in late antique and Byzantine art, and examples survive in many different media, attesting to the wide circulation of an iconographic topos.<sup>102</sup> It is not necessary to

99 Fol. 198r: ΠΕΡΙ ΖΩΩΝ ΑΛΟΓΩΝ ΦΥΣΙΚΗ ΣΟΦΙΑ ΚΕΚΟΜΗΜΕΝΩΝ. (Likewise in PG 95:1569C.)

100 Job 39:19 (horse), Job 39:26 (hawk), Job 39:27–29 (vulture, “γύψ” in the Septuagint text, translated by Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 116, as “eagle,” probably because he used an English translation of the Bible based on the King James version, where an eagle is mentioned instead of a vulture), Job 38:41 (raven), Job 39:1–3 (deer, mistakenly identified by Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 116, as a goat, for which see n. 198, below), Job 39:5–6 (wild ass). In the *Sacra Parallela*, the passages are included in the above order (jumping from chapter 39 to chapter 38 and back to chapter 39 of the Book of Job), and the animals represented appear in exactly the same order. In Fig. 16 I have highlighted all the names of the animals mentioned in Job 38–39 that are represented in the lateral margin. The ants and the bees depicted in the lower margin correspond to Proverbs 6:6–8.

101 Job 39:26 (PG 95:1569C).

102 Just three examples out of many: the eagle on the surviving fragment from an ivory diptych of Consul Basilius, around 480, now in Milan, Civiche Raccolte d'Arte Applicata, D. Wright, “Persistence of Pagan Art Patronage in Fifth-Century Rome,” in *Aetos: Studies in Honour of Cyril Mango*, ed. I. Ševčenko and I. Hutter (Stuttgart, 1998), 357, fig. 6; the eagle on the left part of a 10th-century relief now in the British Museum, London, in *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections*, ed. D. Buckton (London, 1994), cat. 151, pp. 140–41; and the eagle at the right part of a cross on an 11th-century, double-sided relief in the Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens, M. Sklavou-Mauroeide, *Γλυπτά του Βυζαντινού Μουσείου Αθηνών* (Athens, 1999), cat. 175–76, pp. 128–30. In the first example the lower part of the bird is missing, in the other two the image is whole and the tail of the bird is depicted in profile as in the *Sacra Parallela* miniature. Many more

97 Ibid., 169, figs. 411, 435.

98 Ibid., 163, fig. 408.



Fig. 16 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 198r, Job, horse, hawk, vulture, raven, deer, wild ass, bees, ants (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



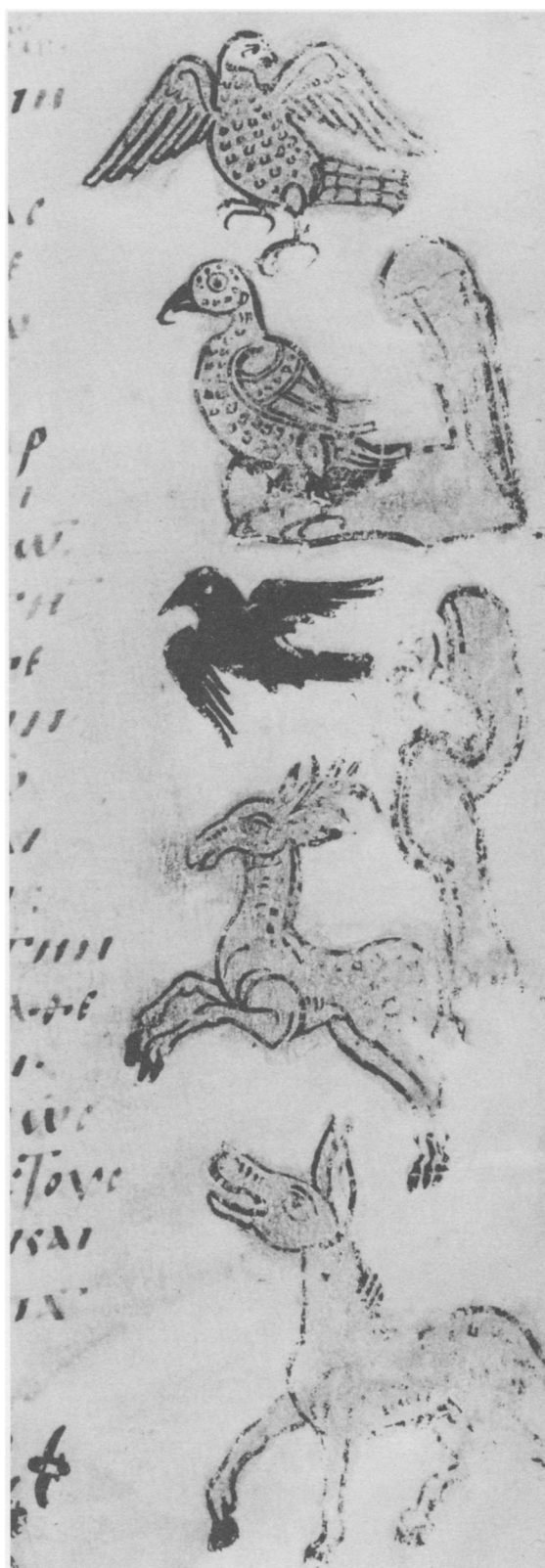


Fig. 17 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 198r, hawk, vulture, raven, deer, wild ass (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

assume that the image of the *Sacra Parallela* hawk was based on an illustrated codex of Job rather than on the painter's familiarity with such a common iconographic type, which suited perfectly the reference of the text to the outspread wings of the bird. In the Patmos Job (codex 171 of the Monastery of St. John the Theologian, Fig. 18), a similar bird is perched on a rock,<sup>103</sup> but the *Sacra Parallela* painter omitted any notion of terrain. It is possible that he wanted to represent the bird in flight, interpreting the phrase "ΑΝΑΠΙΕΤΑCΑC ΤΑC ΠΤΕΡΥΓΑC ΑΥΤΟΥ ΑΚΙΝΗΤΟC" as referring to the hawk gliding through the air with spread and immobile wings.<sup>104</sup> The depiction of a rock would be out of place in such a miniature; but even if the *Sacra Parallela* painter wanted to suggest that the bird was standing, he did not need to represent the ground—which likewise is omitted on the same page under the feet of the horse, the deer, and the ass.<sup>105</sup> By contrast, the vulture and the raven are represented in a rocky landscape and close to a nest, respectively, because of some relevant references in the Book of Job. The vulture is said to be sitting in its nest, on a protruding rock, searching with its eyes from a distance: ΑΥΛΙΖΕΤΑΙ ΕΠ' ΕΞΟΧΗ ΠΕΤΡΑC . . . ΠΟΡΩΘΕΝ ΔΕ ΟΙ ΟΦΘΑΛΜΟΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ CΚΟΠΕΥΟΥCΙ.<sup>106</sup> The *Sacra Parallela* painter depicted the bird in a protruding, rocky landscape and emphasized its watchful eye, rendering it round and with a large black pupil which gives the impression that the bird is indeed looking intently into the distance.

representations of eagles with widespread wings and their tail depicted vertically behind their legs survive from the late antique and Byzantine periods in various media, ranging from cameos and jewelry to military signa, manuscripts, and textiles. For example, see the 10th/11th-century textiles in A. Muthesius, *Byzantine Silk Weaving: AD 400 to AD 1200* (Vienna, 1997), plates 14A–B, 74A, 85B.

<sup>103</sup> Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe* (n. 32 above), fig. 127 (p. 475 of the manuscript).

<sup>104</sup> This was probably the intended message of the Septuagint passage, since in this chapter of Job, God is referring to particular abilities and characteristics of animals which reflect his wisdom (and certainly a bird gliding on air without moving its outspread wings is more awe-inspiring than a bird standing still on the ground with its wings held in a similar pose).

<sup>105</sup> Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 116) assumed that the *Sacra Parallela* painter copied the animals from an illustrated Book of Job that contained images similar to the ones in the Patmos Job, and that he omitted the rock below the hawk's feet because of lack of space. On the contrary, in the following discussion and the comments on p. 158 n. 198, below, I suggest that the use of such a model is highly unlikely and in any case impossible to prove.

<sup>106</sup> Job 39:27–29 (PG 95:1569C).



**Fig. 18** Cod. Patmiacus 171, p. 475,  
hawk (photo courtesy of the Library of  
St. John's Monastery, Patmos)

By comparison to the smaller and elongated eye of the hawk, the wide-open round eye of the vulture seems to be staring (Fig. 17).

When mentioning the raven, the text also refers to its young “wandering in search of food” (NEOCCOI ΓΑΡ ΑΥΤΟΥ . . . ΠΛΑΝΩΜΕΝΟΙ ΤΑ CITA ΖΗΤΟΥΝΤΕC).<sup>107</sup> In this case the miniaturist departed from the text and depicted only the grown-up raven flying, its chicks left behind nested on a rock (Fig. 16). Perhaps he wanted to emphasize the difference in age between parent and children, but he may also have been aware of the meaning of NEOCCOI, the term used to identify the young ravens in the text: this word is employed not only for “young birds,” but also for “nestling chicks” that are not yet able to fly. Weitzmann observed that no other surviving miniature of this passage in illustrated Byzantine codices of the Book of Job includes the chicks of the raven. In other words, this *Sacra Parallela* miniature is closer to the text than any other miniature of the same subject known today.<sup>108</sup>

Finally, the wild ass is depicted neighing, with its head raised and its red tongue protruding out of its open mouth, as if to give the impression that this animal is

indeed wild. These eloquent details become even more obvious if we compare them to the characteristics of the wild ass depicted in the Patmos Job (Fig. 19): here the animal's head is not raised and its mouth is closed, while its lifted foreleg is reminiscent of parading horses, so that the image gives the impression that a domesticated rather than a wild ass is depicted.<sup>109</sup> In none of the cases described above is there any evidence to suggest that the painter of Parisinus 923 was using a model rather than carefully illustrating the text he had in front of him.<sup>110</sup> Only the *Sacra Parallela* horse (Fig. 16), with its one foreleg raised as if on parade, closely resembles the same animal in the Patmos Job (Fig. 20),<sup>111</sup> but this similarity does not necessarily point to the use of an illustrated model manuscript. As in the case of the bird with

**109** See Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe*, fig. 124. The horse in both Patm. 171 and Paris. 923 is depicted in the same formulaic pose, with one foreleg raised. This iconographic topos is discussed below. Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 116) noticed that in the Patmos codex the ass assumes this pose, but he did not contrast it with the wild attitude of the ass in the *Sacra Parallela*. On the contrary, he considered the two miniatures very similar and he added, “Thus for every one of the animals, as far as they were selected out of a fuller animal cycle, a parallel could be found in one or another Job manuscript.”

**110** See also the discussion at p. 158, n. 198, below.

**111** See Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe*, fig. 126.

**107** Job 38:41 (PG 95:1569 CD).

**108** Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 116.



**Fig. 19** Cod. Patmiacus 171, p. 470, wild ass (photo courtesy of the Library of St. John's Monastery, Patmos)



**Fig. 20** Cod. Patmiacus 171, p. 471, horse (photo courtesy of the Library of St. John's Monastery, Patmos)

widespread wings, the depiction of horses in this pose is an iconographic topos in Byzantine art, as can be seen in the wide diffusion of this formula in various media,<sup>112</sup> and by its appearance in other miniatures of the *Sacra Parallela* codex itself.<sup>113</sup>

The attention to detail in these *Sacra Parallela* miniatures, from the spread wings of the hawk and the staring eye of the vulture to the chicks of the raven and the wild attitude of the ass, are altogether unparalleled in any other Byzantine illustrated Job codex. Moreover, such details could easily have been overlooked and missed if the painter was just copying models without paying attention to the text he was illustrating. In the context of the *Sacra Parallela* chapter "On irrational beasts," the references from Job 38–39 to the above animals become more important than they are in the Book of Job itself; therefore, the attention of the *Sacra Parallela* miniaturist to detail is all the more justified as an effort to emphasize specific characteristics of the animals described. Likewise, the detailed and careful characterization of the infirm in Christ's healing miracles is particularly important in its florilegium context. It is difficult to believe that such a result would have been accomplished if the painter had been copying models without being critical and attentive about the function and purpose of his work.

In the cases examined above, the miniaturist of Parisinus 923 respected the content and context of the excerpts he illustrated and through his iconographic and/or compositional choices he strove to serve the didactic purpose of the florilegium. Occasionally he even took some liberties that added vividness to his creations and therefore promoted the didactic character of the codex. The miniatures examined in the next section illustrate another aspect of the painter's interest in the didactic message of the *Sacra Parallela*, and the liberties he took in order to serve it.

**112** For example, textiles like the 8th/9th-century fragment in the Vatican Museo Sacro, the 8th-century fragment in Lyon, and the 11th-century tapestry in Bamberg; Muthesius, *Byzantine Silk Weaving* (n. 102 above), plates 19B, 24B, 52B. In the Patmos codex, the horse, the goat-deer (τραγέλαφος), and the wild ass are all depicted in the same pose, suggesting how commonplace this formula was (see Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe*, figs. 123–25).

**113** For example, on fols. 31r and 210v (David's horse and the horses at Naaman's chariot); see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 181, 177.



## Emphasis on Narrative

It has often been noted in scholarly literature that there is extensive lack of correspondence between text and image in the Paris *Sacra Parallela*.<sup>114</sup> The following examples indicate that exactly the opposite is true: miniatures that at first might appear inconsistent with the text they illustrate are in fact designed to emphasize its narrative content and moral message and therefore to be consistent with the didactic purpose of the compilation. This is done in either of the following ways: the miniatures represent events that the text mentions in the past or in the future tense; or they depict events not explicitly mentioned but commonly known to be part of the same biblical stories.

I shall first consider *Sacra Parallela* miniatures representing dramatic and well-known biblical episodes, like Jonah being cast into the mouth of the whale or the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, miniatures which illustrate passages referring to a previous stage of the relevant biblical stories: Jonah asking the sailors to throw him in the sea and the three Hebrews declaring that they will not betray their God, who will certainly save them from Nebuchadnezzar's fire.<sup>115</sup> In such cases the painter's choice was not guided by the availability of models and a tendency to copy them uncritically and indiscriminately,<sup>116</sup> but by the conscious decision to depict the most emotional and dramatic moments of well-known stories, so as to imprint with indelible colors the moral message of the relevant passages on the memory of the readers. It is certainly more effective and meaningful to depict Jonah thrown

into the sea rather than Jonah asking the sailors to do so, under a title dedicated "to those who are in distress."<sup>117</sup> Likewise, under the title "That we must fear God more than humans,"<sup>118</sup> it is more meaningful to show the three Hebrews unharmed in the fiery furnace, therefore proving that God is more powerful than any earthly ruler, than to show the three young men debating with Nebuchadnezzar. Many more such examples can be adduced.

On folio 205v, Abraham is shown leading Sarah away from the Pharaoh, because in the relevant excerpt the king himself orders him to take his wife and leave.<sup>119</sup> Although the relevant passage where the departure of the couple takes place is not included in the *Sacra Parallela*, it is not surprising that the painter should illustrate the Pharaoh's order by representing the event of which he speaks, rather than by showing him just talking to Abraham. On the contrary, the miniaturist's emphasis on narrative makes his illustration all the more meaningful and vivid. Compiled under the title "On death and on the fear it causes,"<sup>120</sup> both the passage and the relevant miniature illustrate how Abraham's fear of dying because the Egyptians might desire to take from him his beautiful wife, and his decision to present her as his sister, has eventually helped him avoid death, since both he and his wife are shown walking unharmed away from Egypt.

Likewise, under the title which proclaims that deceit done for a good cause is praiseworthy,<sup>121</sup> Rebecca's plot

<sup>114</sup> This evaluation was advanced mostly by Weitzmann (who attributed the alleged discrepancies between text and image to the inattentive copying of models; see *Sacra Parallela*, 12, 14, and various other parts of his monograph, some of which will be mentioned below). Other scholars have accepted this opinion on lack of correspondence between text and image; for example, Brubaker, "Byzantine Art in the Ninth Century" (n. 11 above), 45, n. 76; eadem, "Byzantine Culture in the Ninth Century" (n. 29 above), 68, 71 (where she wrote that in cod. Paris. gr. 923 the visual narratives "do not further the dialogue between word and image. . . . Of the major surviving ninth-century illuminated manuscripts, the *Sacra Parallela* reveals the least evidence for a carefully structured dialectic between verbal and visual narrative. . . ."). However, she described in a more nuanced and positive way the relationship of word and image in the *Sacra Parallela* codex in her *Vision and Meaning* (n. 4 above)—e.g., on p. 415 she wrote that sometimes the miniatures "extend the narrative by picturing scenes not specifically described in the florilegion text."

<sup>115</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 138, 157, figs. 316, 385. The scenes appear on fols. 29v and 373v of the *Sacra Parallela*.

<sup>116</sup> As suggested by Weitzmann, *ibid*.

<sup>117</sup> A folio appears to be missing between current fols. 28 and 29 in the *Sacra Parallela*, so the title under which Jonah 1:12 is compiled is now lost; it can be deduced, however, through reference to PG 96:20–21, where the same texts as those surviving on fol. 29 of cod. Paris. gr. 923 are compiled under the title "Περὶ θλιβομένων, καὶ φροντιζόντων καὶ λύπης." In a few cases Weitzmann himself admitted that the reason for representing an episode mentioned but not already accomplished in a compiled passage was because such a scene "contains the climactic action of the episode and thus rounds out the story cut short in the quotation." However, he tended to assume that in such cases the textual references present in the relevant passages cannot justify the subject of the miniatures and therefore models must be presupposed. See Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 95.

<sup>118</sup> Fol. 373r: ΟΤΙ ΧΡΗ ΜΑΛΛΟΝ ΦΟΒΙΘΑΙ ΘΕΟΝ Η ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΥ. (Likewise in PG 96:429B.)

<sup>119</sup> Genesis 12:10–16, 18–19 (PG 96:44D–45A). Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 38, figs. 18–20.

<sup>120</sup> Fol. 205v: ΠΕΡΙ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΦΟΒΟΥ ΕΞ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΓΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΥ. ("Περὶ θανάτου, καὶ φόβου ἐξ αὐτοῦ γενομένου" in PG 96:44D.)

<sup>121</sup> Fol. 78r: ΠΕΡΙ ΑΠΑΤΗΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΑΝ ΓΕΝΟΜΕΝΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΟΤΙ ΕΠΑΙΝΕΤΟΣ ΧΩΡΙΣ ΔΟΛΟΥ ΓΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ. ("Περὶ ἀπάτης κατ' οἰκονομίαν γινομένης καὶ ὅτι ἀπάτη δόλου ἀμοιροῦσα, ἐπαινον προξενεῖ τῷ δεδρακότι" in PG 95:1224C.)

to help Jacob receive his father's blessing instead of Esau is illustrated with two miniatures: a vivid scene of dialogue between the mother and her child Jacob, but also the actual accomplishment of the deceitful plan, even though its fulfillment is not included in the *Sacra Parallela* excerpt.<sup>122</sup> All the elements depicted in the scene where Jacob approaches his blind father to receive his blessing (like the furs covering his hands and neck and the meal brought to please Isaac) are included in the existing *Sacra Parallela* passage in Rebecca's preparations for the deceitful encounter. Even if the artist did use a model (and there is no evidence that he did), it was his intention to depict "a praiseworthy deceit" in accordance with the title, and not the availability of models, that guided him in his choice. For the same reasons, our painter chose to depict another "praiseworthy deceit" under the same title, although the event is mentioned only in God's instructions to his prophet and is not yet accomplished: Samuel is shown listening to God, who tells him that he must take an ox with him in order to pretend he is going to perform a sacrifice; by thus avoiding the arousal of Saul's suspicion, he can go to Jesse's house and anoint his chosen son.<sup>123</sup> The last two scenes (Samuel with the ox and the anointing of David) are indeed illustrated.<sup>124</sup> The excerpted passage ends with the phrase "And Samuel did everything God said," so the painter had yet another reason to illustrate the "praiseworthy deceit" which was foretold in the dialogue between God and Samuel.

A final example will suffice to illustrate the logic of narrative followed by the *Sacra Parallela* painter: under the title which admonishes that we must lend an ear to the prayers of supplicants,<sup>125</sup> a passage from the Book of Kings narrates how Ahaziah sent envoys to beseech Elijah to visit him. An angel of God told the prophet to accept the invitation, and so "Elijah stood up and went to the king."<sup>126</sup> The encounter of the two men is not described in the excerpted passage; however, the painter chose to represent it after the dialogue of the angel and

the prophet, in order to demonstrate how Elijah carried out the injunction of the florilegium title (and the last phrase of the excerpt): he listened to the entreaties of a supplicant and granted him his wish.

It is also worth noting that in some cases the painter of the *Sacra Parallela* depicts events that are mentioned in the text as already accomplished, rather than those that are forthcoming. A very characteristic example is his illustration of the story of the prodigal son, under the title "On hatred among brothers."<sup>127</sup> The passage excerpted in the florilegium is Luke 15:25–32, where the oldest son comes back from the fields and refuses to enter the house because his father is celebrating the return of the prodigal younger brother. From left to right, the painter has depicted servants killing the fatted calf, the father, younger son, and other male figures seated at a table, a musician playing an instrument, a servant carrying a platter with food, another servant talking to the older brother, and finally the father addressing the latter. Even though the first two episodes of the composition (the killing of the calf and the banquet) occur in an earlier passage of this Gospel story that is omitted from our codex (Luke 15:23–24), there is no reason to hypothesize that they must derive from an illustrated Gospel used by our painter as model.<sup>128</sup> Every single detail of these *Sacra Parallela* miniatures is fully justified by the existing passage: when the older brother approaches the house, he hears music and singing (hence the musician playing an instrument); and the servant to whom he talks informs him that the father ordered the killing of the fatted calf and the celebrations in honor of his brother (hence the first two scenes, the killing of the animal and the banquet). The last two scenes, in which the older son talks to the servant and to his father, are the events that actually take place in the Gospel passage illustrated here. In other words, the painter has represented both past and present events and has thus created a vivid narrative sequence illustrating the reasons for the older son's jealousy of his younger brother.<sup>129</sup>

122 Fols. 78r–78v, Genesis 27:6–18 (PG 95:1224CD). Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 42, figs. 33–34.

123 1 Kings 16:1–4 (PG 95:1228A).

124 Fol. 80r. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 77, figs. 116–17.

125 Fol. 213v: ΠΕΡΙ ΙΚΕΤΕΥΟΝΤΩΝ· ΚΑΙ ΟΤΙ ΧΡΗ ΤΑΚ ΙΚΕΤΙΑΚ ΤΩΝ ΔΕΟΜΕΝΩΝ ΠΡΟΚΙΕΘΑΙ. (Identical in PG 96:60A.)

126 4 Kings 1:13, 15 (PG 96:60B). Illustrated in fol. 214r. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 92, figs. 172–73.

127 Fol. 191r: ΠΙΕΠΙ ΜΙCΑΔΕΛΦΙΑC. (Likewise in PG 96:173A.) The miniatures in question appear on fol. 391v; see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 464.

128 This is the opinion of Weitzmann, *ibid.*, 177–78.

129 There is no evidence to prove the use of a model in the creation of these miniatures, which are the earliest known representations of this biblical story, with no parallels in the surviving corpus of Byzantine art. Weitzmann (*ibid.*, 178) noticed that cod. Laur. VI. 23 "has not one [miniature] which parallels those of the *Sacra Parallela*," and he tried to prove

In short, the predisposition of the painter to depict events which in the excerpted passages are mentioned as already accomplished or forthcoming does not create a discrepancy between text and image, but on the contrary favors a narrative presentation that best illustrates the moral message of the title under which the excerpts were compiled.

The same intention to serve the didactic purpose of the *Sacra Parallela* can be seen in cases where the painter represented events that are not explicitly mentioned in the relevant passage but make up part of the same biblical story. Most probably, the painter was familiar with the complete narrative and decided to refer to its most critical moment so as to emphasize the moral message of the relevant florilegium title under which the miniature would appear. In other words, he used his visual narrative to complete the textual one and enhance its didactic impact.

Such an example has already been discussed in the case of the woman with the issue of blood: she is shown touching Christ's garment, although this particular action is not mentioned in the relevant passage (Fig. 11). The painter was obviously aware of this well-known Gospel story; consequently, he chose to expand the abbreviated textual reference (abbreviated exactly because this miracle was so well known), by illustrating what was missing, so that an additional healing miracle of Christ could be included in the sequence illustrating the relevant title.<sup>130</sup>

Another characteristic example of the artist's choice to complement the written word of the *Sacra Parallela* is the miniature which illustrates 4 Kings 7:18–19, under the title "On incredulity; and that those who have a good reason to show disbelief are forgiven by God."<sup>131</sup> Elisha is shown prophesying to a royal official the end of famine in Jerusalem (Fig. 21). The prophet predicts that by the same time the next morning a measure of grain will be

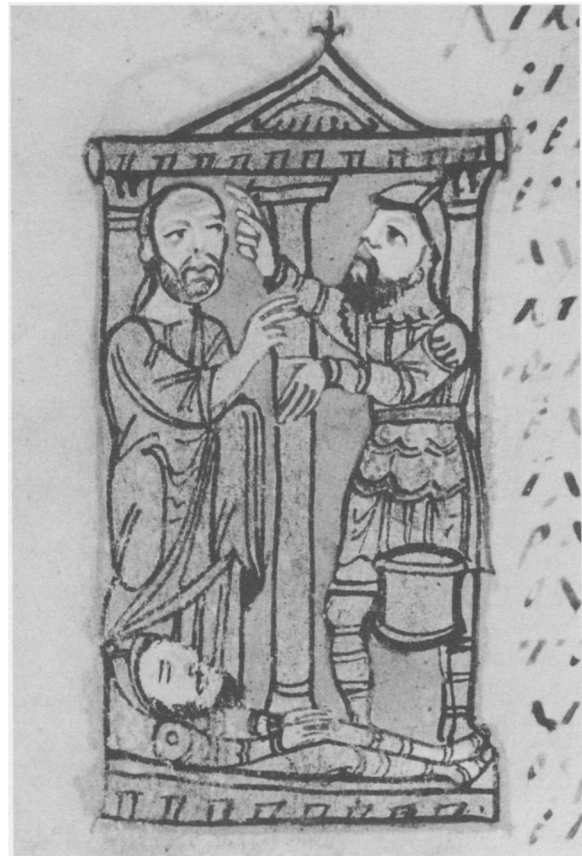


Fig. 21 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 144v, Elisha foretells the end of famine to the incredulous official, and the official lies dead (courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

sold for a low price at the Gate of Samaria. A container of grain is depicted before the official, who is shown gesturing and looking toward heaven. This detail illustrates his incredulity, for according to the text he mocked the prophet by saying, "God will produce a waterfall of grain from heaven! This is not possible." And the prophet replied: "You will see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat."<sup>132</sup> This sinister prediction referred to an event which is mentioned in the Septuagint just before and just after the passage compiled in our florilegium: the next day the starving people of Jerusalem rushed out of

an affinity with the miniatures found in the 12th-century illustrated Gospel at the Greek Institute of Venice. However, his own description of the miniatures in the latter codex betrays the many elements that differentiate them from the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures. The two manuscripts have in common only the subject of the episodes depicted (fully justified by the content of the text they illustrate), but the specific representation of these episodes is different.

130 See above, pp. 130–31.

131 Fol. 144r: ΠΕΡΙ ΔΥΣΠΙΣΤΙΑΣ· ΚΑΙ ΟΤΙ ΕΝΕΥΛΟΓΩ ΑΙΤΙΑ Ο ΔΥΣΠΙΣΤΗΣ ΑΙΤΙΑ ΘΕΩ ΣΥΓΓΙΝΩΣΚΕΤΑΙ. ("Περὶ δυσπιστίας· καὶ ὅτι ὁ ἐπ' εὐλόγῳ αἰτίᾳ δυσπιστήσας, Θεῷ συγγινώσκεται" in PG 95:1409D.) The miniature under discussion appears on fol. 144v.

132 The wording included in cod. Paris. gr. 923 is almost identical to that in PG 95:1412A (the main difference being the omission of the introductory phrase "Εἶπεν Ἐλισαίῃ" in the Paris codex. Although the quotation is from 4 Kings 7:18–19, in PG the passage is wrongly identified as 4 Kings 7:1–2, which describes the same event but in a somewhat different way. Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 95) followed the passage identification used in PG.

the Gate of Samaria to plunder the abandoned camp of the Arameans and in so doing they trampled upon and killed the official.<sup>133</sup> In other words, his incredulity was punished by death, since he had no good reason to doubt Elisha's words, and therefore was not forgiven by God (as the relevant florilegium title also implies by stating that only "those who have a good reason to show disbelief are forgiven by God"). The compiled passage hints at the upcoming death of the official, which the painter has explicitly illustrated in order to reinforce the moral message of the florilegium title. It is not unreasonable to hypothesize that the painter copied this miniature from an illustrated Book of Kings, where the death of the official would have accompanied the relevant passage, but no such scene survives in the only Byzantine illustrated Book of Kings known today.<sup>134</sup> It is equally possible that both the painter and the readers of the *Sacra Parallela* were familiar with the story; therefore, the former did not have to resort to a model to illustrate the event implied by the prophet, while the latter did not have to resort to a Book of Kings in order to read the whole episode and comprehend why the official is depicted lying dead on the ground. The readers' familiarity with this biblical episode may also have been presupposed by the compiler or the scribe of the *Sacra Parallela*; and for this reason he decided that in referring to this episode of 4 Kings 7, it was sufficient to quote only verses 18–19, rather than verses 17–20, where the meaning of Elisha's sinister words and the punishment of the official for his incredulity are fully explained.

Another case worth mentioning is the miniature which shows Elijah throwing his mantle to Elisha while ascending to heaven (Fig. 22). This episode is depicted under the florilegium title which praises perseverance and patience as the cause of good results and admonishes

servants to behave in this way and masters to choose their servants carefully.<sup>135</sup> The compiled passage from 4 Kings 2:9–10 narrates, not Elijah's ascension, but the discussion which preceded it: Elijah asked Elisha what he wished to have before the prophet would be taken away by God, and the disciple answered that he wanted his prophetic spirit "twofold." Elijah told him that his request was a difficult one, but that if he was present at the time of Elijah's departure, his wish would be granted. The painter probably knew the story of Elijah's ascent to heaven and realized that the mantle he threw to Elisha allowed him to have double his master's power.<sup>136</sup> So instead of depicting the two biblical figures in discussion, he represented the climax of the story, and through his emphasis on narrative he highlighted the moral message of the relevant passage in its florilegium context.<sup>137</sup> His intention was to show Elisha's great reward for being Elijah's faithful and persevering follower, as the relevant florilegium title suggests. On the other hand, when the same story of Elisha's request to receive Elijah's spirit was compiled under the title advising association with virtuous men in order to become like them,<sup>138</sup> our painter

135 Fol. 268v (on which the miniature also appears): ΠΕΡΙ ΠΑΡΑΜΟΝΗΣ, ΚΑΙ ΠΑΡΑΜΕΝΟΝΤΩΝ. ΟΤΙ Η ΠΑΡΑΜΟΝΗ ΕΡΓΟΝ ΑΝΥΕΙ, ΚΑΙ ΧΡΗ ΟΥ ΜΟΝΟ ΕΥΝΟΙΚΩΣ, ΑΛΛΑ ΚΑΙ ΥΠΟΜΟΝΗΤΙΚΩΣ ΔΙΑΚΕΙΘΑΙ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΠΡΟΣΛΑΒΟΝΤΑΣ, ΚΑΙ ΜΗΔΕΝΑ ΩΣ ΕΤΥΧΕΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΕΞΕΤΑΚΤΩΣ ΕΙΣ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑΝ ΠΑΡΑΜΟΝΗΣ ΕΙΣΔΕΧΕΘΑΙ. ("Περὶ παραμονῆς, καὶ παραμενόντων. ὅτι παραμονὴ ἔργον ἀνύει, καὶ χρὴ οὐ μόνον εὐνοικῶς, ἀλλὰ καὶ παραμονητικῶς διακείσθαι πρὸς τοὺς προσλαβόντας, καὶ μηδὲνα ὡς ἐτύχε, καὶ ἀνεξετάστως εἰς ὑπηρεσίαν παραμονῆς εἰσδέχεσθαι" in PG 96:460.) The title is not included in the Vatican but in the Rupefucaldian recension, as 24th instead of 23rd (cod. Paris. gr. 923) of stoicheion Π. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 93, fig. 175.

136 4 Kings 2:11–14.

137 See Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning* (n. 4 above), 356–60, for the iconography of this scene in other ninth-century manuscripts: the Paris Gregory (cod. Paris. gr. 510), the Vatican Christian Topography (cod. Vat. gr. 699), and the Chludov Psalter. The iconographic type is similar in all manuscripts, but there are differences in the details. For example, Brubaker noted that the miniature of the *Sacra Parallela* is the only one in which Elijah is correctly represented without a mantle, since he is giving it to Elisha; in the other manuscripts he is shown wearing the mantle, which is depicted a second time in his hand, about to be delivered to Elisha.

138 In PG 96:349B the title is "Περὶ συνδιαγωγῆς χρηστῶν ἀνδρῶν· καὶ ὅτι χρὴ ἀρίστοις ἀνδράσι κολλᾶσθαι, καὶ μὴ πονηροῖς. Ἐξομοιοῦται γάρ τις, μεθ' ὧν τὰς διατριβὰς ποιεῖται." I did not have the chance to read this title in Parisinus 923 during the brief time I was allowed to examine the codex in the original, and the title is almost illegible in the microfilm (probably because the letters have faded off the gilded background). However, I was able to identify some common words between this title

133 4 Kings 7:17, 20.

134 J. Lassus, *L'illustration byzantine du Livre des Rois: Vaticanus Graecus 333*, Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques 9 (Paris, 1973). Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 95) assumed the use of such a hypothetical model, but he also commented that the dialogue between Elisha and the official is linked thematically with the latter's death, thus implying that the painter had good reason to represent them in the same composition. Kessler (review of *Sacra Parallela* [n. 30 above], 209) adopted a harsher approach when he used the same miniature as an argument in favor of Weitzmann's model-theory: "Is one to imagine that the artist of 923 turned from the text at hand, consulted the Bible, and illustrated an irrelevant verse? Is Weitzmann's conclusion not much more believable: that the illuminator inadvertently included a feature from his pictorial model not required by the compendium?"



chose to represent Elisha with hands covered in veneration before his master (Fig. 23).<sup>139</sup> This is because here a lengthier passage is compiled, in which Elisha is said to follow Elijah persistently wherever he goes, until the prophet, moved by his disciple's dedication, asks him what he wishes for—and Elisha replies that he wants to be like him (but twice as inspired).<sup>140</sup> The emphasis of this passage and of the relevant title is on being in the company of good men, rather than on the results of perseverance as in the previous title; so it is logical that in one case Elisha is shown following his master, while in the other he appears receiving the prophet's cloak and spirit.<sup>141</sup>

In all of these examples, the painter took some liberties and, instead of literally illustrating the text, he enriched it through emphasis on narrative. In other cases he chose a different creative path and enhanced his miniatures with visual signs that focus not on narrative but on meaning. Such examples are discussed in the next section.

## Visual Elaboration

The miniatures examined here present iconographic elements that resulted from the artist's interpretative reading of the passages he illustrated; in other words, the elements are not required by the narrative but derive from the painter's ability to elaborate visually on his textual sources in order to highlight their didactic message.

One of the most characteristic of such cases in the Paris *Sacra Parallela* has already been mentioned: it is the insightful combination of the vine and the paralytic of Bethesda in one composition which eloquently visualizes the message of the relevant passages on divine castigation and reward (Fig. 7). This unique composition was not dictated by the compilation of passages from John 5 and 15 under the same florilegium title, but was the result of

and the relevant one in PG 96:349B, and since the same passages are excerpted under both, they must have the same subject.

<sup>139</sup> Fol. 328r, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 92, fig. 174.

<sup>140</sup> 4 Kings 2:2–6, 9–10 (PG 96:349CD). Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 92, mentioned only verses 9–10.

<sup>141</sup> The fact that in both cases the compiler did not consider it necessary to include the end of the story, where Elisha receives the cloak as a reward for his dedication to his master, could indicate that the episode was very well known and there was no need to mention it in full.



Fig. 22 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 268v, Elisha receives Elijah's mantle (courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



Fig. 23 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 328r, Elisha follows Elijah (courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



Fig. 24 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 11v, St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory of Nazianzus (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

the painter's inventive and perceptive response to this compilation. Another case of visual exegesis appears on folio 11v, where two rather unusual miniatures of Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzenus illustrate two excerpts from their works (Fig. 24). The first miniature shows a city wall with battlements and towers, behind which appear the faces of several people, topped by a much bigger bust of Basil. The second miniature depicts Gregory inside an architectural construction that consists of a protective polygonal wall and a roof supported by two columns. Weitzmann considered both illustrations to be abbreviations of teaching scenes like those seen in the ninth-century codex Ambrosianus E49–50.<sup>142</sup> However, in these *Sacra Parallela* miniatures the Fathers do not make any speaking gesture whatsoever (as is normal in teaching scenes), but simply face frontally. Moreover, even if we assume that the construction around Gregory is an abbreviated representation of a church inside which

<sup>142</sup> In his view, such teaching scenes would have existed as title miniatures of the homilies excerpted here, in the illustrated codices the painter used as models. See Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 213, 228.

the teaching scene would have taken place in the alleged model, how can we explain the city walls in Basil's illustration and the striking difference of scale between him and the other figures?<sup>143</sup>

The answer is provided in the relevant patristic passages, which mention exactly the same concept: the obligation of the priest to protect his congregation from

<sup>143</sup> In the Milan Gregory (cod. Ambros. E 49–50), Gregory is depicted at the same scale as his audience in the majority of cases (19 surviving miniatures, pp. 19, 65, 119, 156, 193, 202, 209, 214, 383, 437, 453, 544, 568, 639, 657, 600, 694, 698, 721, 803). In 10 cases he is represented at larger scale, but only in 2 instances (pp. 4, 354) is this difference very pronounced. In all the other cases (pp. 342, 344, 384, 478, 652, 676, 795), only the bodies of the listeners are shorter, while their heads are fairly similar in size to Gregory's head, which might appear larger only because of the longer beard. Note, on the contrary, the great difference in scale between the heads of Basil and the other figures in the *Sacra Parallela* miniature. In most of the miniatures in the Milan codex, the figures in the audience are shorter because they appear in the lower margin, in contrast to Gregory, who stands in the lateral margin. (On p. 672 the audience is not preserved but would have been in smaller scale, for the same reason.) For images of the miniatures see Grabar, *Grégoire de l'Ambrosienne* (n. 42 above).

sin, evil, and the wrath of God, by telling them the truth about their duties as Christians and about the punishment that will come if they do not fulfil them. Both passages are compiled under the title “On rulers and leaders, that they must make frequent use of admonitions and protestations to the people, for their own safety.”<sup>144</sup> The emphasis of both passages is on the protection of the faithful by their priest, a concept that, I believe, the artist has represented in the two successive miniatures, with great originality and successful variation from one case to the other: Basil rises above his flock as the continuation and embodiment of the protective wall that stands before them, so that the whole composition symbolizes the defense offered by the saintly priest against the “enemy” who seeks to harm the soul of “the people” with his “sword” (according to Basil’s own words).<sup>145</sup> Gregory stands inside a protective construction which could symbolize the Church and the security found therein from the “sword” of divine castigation, thanks to the moral admonitions of the priest.<sup>146</sup> Alternatively,

**144** Fol. IIIr: ΠΕΡΙ ΑΡΧΟΝΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΕΚΤΟΤΩΝ· ΟΤΙ ΧΡΗ [ΠΥΚΝΟ] ΤΕΡΑΙΣ ΤΑΙΣ ΝΟΥΘΕΣΙΑΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΑΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΑΙΣ ΧΡΗΣΘΑΙ ΑΥΤΟΥΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΛΑΟΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ ΑΚΙΝΔΥΝΟΝ. This title is not included in the Vatican recension of the *Sacra Parallela* text published in PG 95–96, but it appears in the Rufucaldian recension, PG 96:441 (where “πυκνότερον” is written instead of “ΠΥΚΝΟΤΕΡΑΙΣ”). The miniature with Gregory Nazianzenus is depicted next to St. Basil’s passage, because the space next to Gregory’s own quotation is taken up by the scene of Joseph before the Pharaoh, which illustrates a passage of the next florilegium title (Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 46, fig. 45). This proximity of both patristic portraits to the same passage emphasizes the common message of the two excerpts.

**145** I could not identify this text through a search in TLG (by the key word ὑπεστειλάμην), so I transcribe it here in full (highlighting in bold the three words mentioned above—also underlined in Fig. 24): ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΟΥ ΕΚ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΤΗΧΗΤΙΚΟΥ: / ΟΥΔΕΝ ΥΠΕΣΤΕΙΛΑΜΗΝ / ΤΟΥ ΜΗ ΕΙΠΕΙΝ ΥΜΙΝ / ΤΑ ΣΥΜΦΕΡΟΝΤΑ ΠΑΡΑ / ΚΛΗΤΙΚΩΣ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΗΣ / ΠΡΟΧΗΚΟΥΣΗΣ ΝΟΥΘΕ/ΣΙΑΣ. ΑΥΤΟΙ ΛΟΙΠΟΝ / ΟΙΔΑΤΕ ΠΩΣ ΦΥΛΑΤΤΕ/ΤΕ· ΕΓΩ ΓΑΡ ΑΗΝ ΕΝ Ε/ΜΟΙ ΕΙΠΟΝ ΥΜΙΝ ΕΙΣ / ΠΡΟΣΩΠΟΝ ΤΑ ΣΥΜ/ΦΕΡΟΝΤΑ· ΜΗ ΠΟΤΕ / ΕΠΕΛΘΟΥΣΑ **ΡΟΜΦΑΙΑ** / ΛΑΒΗ ΨΥΧΗΝ ΕΚ ΤΟΥ / ΛΑΟΥ ΕΙΣ ΚΡΙΜΑ ΕΜΟΙ· / ΕΠΙΤΗΡΕΙ ΓΑΡ ΥΜΩΝ / Ο **ΕΧΘΡΟΣ** ΛΟΙΠΟΝ ΚΑΙ / ΡΗΜΑ ΚΑΙ ΕΝΘΥΜΗ/ΜΑ ΚΑΙ ΕΝΝΟΙΑΝ ΚΑΙ / ΚΗΝΙΜΑ (*sic*) ΚΑΙ ΠΡΑΞΙΝ. In this passage Basil is paraphrasing and alluding to Acts 20:20–21, 27 (“ὥς οὐδὲν ὑπεστειλάμην τῶν συμφερόντων τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς δημοσίᾳ καὶ κατ’ οἴκους, διαμαρτυρούμενος Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν . . . οὐ γὰρ ὑπεστειλάμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι πᾶσαν τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῖν.”)

**146** In this passage Gregory is declaring to his audience that he has warned them about the approaching divine punishment so they would repent and appease God (but because they did not, the plague of hail fell upon them to castigate them for their sins). The text in cod. Paris. gr.

this architectural structure, literally built around the saint, might simply imply that he is the embodiment of protection and security (like Basil, who seems to be the strongest tower of the city walls).

Basil mentions the “sword of the enemy” and Gregory the “sword of divine castigation.” In the former passage the reference to an attacking enemy reflects the Christian perception of the confrontation between good and evil as a spiritual battle, which was often described in military terms.<sup>147</sup> The representation of the fortification walls behind which Basil protects his congregation vividly illustrates this idea of spiritual war between good and evil. By contrast, the “sword of divine castigation” refers not to the conflict of opposing parties but to divine punishment; therefore the emphasis is not on a battle between attacking and defending forces but on the need for protection. It is worth noting that the wall in front of Gregory is very similar in construction and decoration to the one represented in our codex around the virtuous and saved souls in Paradise on the day of the Last Judgment (Fig. 26).<sup>148</sup> In both cases the idea of protection and salvation is symbolized through a similar architectural element. The choice of the roof as a component of the former miniature’s protective symbolism might be related to the subject of Gregory’s homily, mentioned also in the reference heading preceding the passage written on

923 is identical to PG 35:957BC: Ἐγὼ πρῶτος, ὥσπερ ἀνήγγειλα τῷ λαῷ μου ἄνωθεν, καὶ τὸ τοῦ σκοποῦ ἔργον πεπλήρωκα, (οὐ γὰρ ἔκρυψα τὴν ἐρχομένην ῥομφαίαν, ἵνα καὶ τὴν ἑμαυτοῦ ψυχὴν, καὶ τὰς τῶν ἀκουόντων περιποιήσωμαι)· οὕτως ἀναγγεῖλω καὶ τοῦ λαοῦ μου τὴν ἀπειθειαν, ἑμαυτοῦ τὰ ἐκείνου ποιούμενος· εἰ πως ἂν οὕτω τύχοιμι τίνος φιλανθρωπίας καὶ ἀναψύξεως.

**147** See p. 172, esp. n. 267, below. The word ἐχθρός, which Basil uses in order to identify the “enemy” threatening his congregation, was frequently employed in Christian literature to signify the devil and his demons, against whom the virtuous have to wage a continuous battle. This idea is prominent in Luke 10:19, where Christ says to his disciples that he gave them the authority to defeat snakes, scorpions, and every power of “the enemy” (“ἰδοὺ δέδωκα ὑμῖν τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ πατεῖν ἐπάνω ὀφείων καὶ σκορπίων, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ ἐχθροῦ”). The reference of Psalm 9:7 to the destruction of the enemy’s swords (“τοῦ ἐχθροῦ ἐξέλιπον αἱ ῥομφαῖαι εἰς τέλος”) was also interpreted as an allusion to the defeat of the devil. See, for example, Athanasios, *Vita Antonii*, PG 26:904A; idem, *Expositiones in Psalmos*, PG 27:85A; John Chrysostom, *Expositiones in Psalmos*, PG 55:127A. For a few more random examples of the frequent use of the word ἐχθρός as a metonym for the devil see the following works by Athanasios: *Epistula ad episcopos Aegypti et Libyae*, PG 25:588A; *Vita Antonii*, PG 26:852B, 905B, 917C, 925A; *Expositiones in Psalmos*, PG 27:237B; *Quaestiones ad Antiochum ducem*, PG 28:648D, 700B.

**148** Fol. 68v, briefly discussed below, p. 195.





Fig. 25 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 25r, monks pray, a couple lies in bed, animals hunt and rest, and farmers labor (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

folio 11v: it is his homily on the plague of hail, which pours down from heaven and destroys the harvest.<sup>149</sup> A roof offers protection from hail, so the miniature might imply that, by flocking under the moral guidance of a preacher, the congregation can avoid God's wrath and consequently obtain shelter from natural calamities. In any case, these two miniatures do not seem to be uncritical abbreviations of more detailed models, but rather seem to be meaningful creations intended to underline the moral message of the corresponding passages.

Another case worthy of attention appears on folio 25r, where the miniatures illustrate excerpts compiled under the title "On day and night" (Fig. 25).<sup>150</sup> A passage by Gregory Nazianzenus explains how during the night humans rest and wild beasts hunt, while during the day the beasts rest and humans labor.<sup>151</sup> The illustration represents a man and a woman in bed, predators hunting and then resting in a cave, and farmers laboring. Right above the amorous couple, four identically dressed monks with their hands covered as a sign of reverence seem to be praying ceaselessly to God, day and night. Above them, the sun (originally depicted on the right, now flaked off) and the moon witness their continuous prayer, which defies the continuous cycle of mundane and physical activities seen in human societies and nature. There is no direct reference to monks in any of the passages compiled on this page, which makes this vivid contrast between monastic and secular life all the more striking. However, the passage right next to the monks reads: "You have arranged for night and day to follow each other smoothly, honoring the law of brotherhood and friendship (NOMON TIMΩN AΔEΛΦOTHTOC KAI ΦΙΛΙΑC); and during the night you gave an end to the toils of the laboring flesh and during the day you raised (humans) to labors and deeds that are dear to you."<sup>152</sup> The ceaselessly praying monks might not follow

the law of night and day (as they appear praying under the moon and the sun), but they certainly follow the law of brotherhood and friendship. Their alternating black and red hoods might be a subtle visual reference to the alternation of night and day mentioned in the text, but they also refer to the union of different individuals into the monastic brotherhood. An emphasis on the same monastic ideals has already been mentioned in the case of folio 208r, where the compiler of the florilegium appears as abbot next to the first title of stoicheion I, which is dedicated to equality and brotherly love. In both cases the reference to love in monastic brotherhood was not included in the relevant textual source but was added as a visual gloss by the painter.

A different level of visual elaboration is present in the following examples, in which the painter illustrated concepts that are clearly mentioned in the relevant passages, but rendered them with such resourcefulness that the final results lie beyond the limits of literal representation.

The lower half of the lateral margin on folio 69r illustrates God's curse upon Cain for the murder of his brother, narrated in Genesis 4:9–12 (Fig. 27). The passage is compiled under the title "On the curse of the Lord and of the prophets and of the apostles."<sup>153</sup> Cain looks toward the hand of God emerging from heaven, while Abel's corpse is lying in a pit or cave below him, and his soul in the form of a small human figure is extending its hands toward the murderer. As Weitzmann has observed, the representation of Abel's body and soul does not appear in any other surviving depiction of the same

149 Homily XVI, *Εἰς τὸν πατέρα σιωπῶντα διὰ τὴν πληγὴν τῆς χαλάζης*, PG 35:933–64. The title introducing the passage in cod. Paris. gr. 923 is ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΟΥ [ΕΚ ΤΟΥ ΕΙC?] ΤΗΝ ΠΛΗΓΗΝ ΤΗΣ ΧΑΛΑΖΗΣ.

150 ΠΕΡΙ ΗΜΕΡΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΝΥΚΤΟΣ, PG 95:1585CD. For close-ups of the miniatures, see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 644–45.

151 PG 95:1585D–1588A (the last passage by Gregory Nazianzenus to be excerpted under this title).

152 In Fig. 25, I have highlighted the words ΑΔΕΛΦΟΤΗΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΦΙΛΙΑC. This passage is also included in PG 95:1585D (the second passage by Gregory Nazianzenus excerpted under this title). The first of Gregory's passages compiled in cod. Paris. gr. 923 (at the bottom left corner of folio 25r, see PG 95:1585D "Τίς δὲ ἡμέρα καὶ νύξ") is identi-

fied as excerpted from Gregory's homily "On monks" (ΠΕΡΙ ΜΟΝΑΖΟΝΤΩΝ), but the text itself has no reference to monks. Perhaps the title could have contributed to the painter's inspiration to illustrate the next passage (identified as coming from Gregory's homily "On theology") with four monks. Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 229) put forward a very complicated argument in order to relate all the miniatures of this page (with the exception of the monks, for whom he did not propose a source of inspiration) to Psalm 103:19–23. Part of this psalm is quoted in Gregory's homily—but not in the passage of the homily excerpted in the *Sacra Parallela*; so Weitzmann concluded that the miniatures were originally invented for an illustrated Psalter, from which they were copied into an illustrated codex with Gregory's homilies, and finally into the *Sacra Parallela*. The existing quotations in cod. Paris. gr. 923 make this hypothesis totally unnecessary. The painter represented what the text mentions, nocturnal and diurnal occupations of humans and animals, with an interpretative spirit (seen in the depiction of monks) already familiar from some of his other miniatures.

153 ΠΕΡΙ ΑΡΑΣ ΥΠΟ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟCΤΟΛΩΝ ΓΕΝΟΜΕΝΗΣ. PG 95:1188BC. For a close-up of the miniature, see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 12.





**Fig. 26** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 68v, the Last Judgment (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)





**Fig. 27** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 69r, God curses the serpent, Adam, and Eve; God curses Cain for the murder of Abel, shown buried below his brother's feet (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



biblical episode in Byzantine art.<sup>154</sup> In his opinion, both these iconographic elements can be explained through the influence of Jewish legends.<sup>155</sup> However, the relevant biblical passage provides adequate justification for both: Abel's soul seems to illustrate Genesis 4:10, where God says, "the voice of your brother's blood is calling to me out of the earth."<sup>156</sup> To render this statement visually, the painter used the pictorial convention of a miniature human figure as the image of the soul, but he also colored it red, so as to indicate that this is the voice of Abel's blood.<sup>157</sup> Although the Bible does not mention Abel's burial, in Genesis 4:11 God said to Cain that the earth "opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood."<sup>158</sup> The black pit or cave in which Abel's corpse lies looks like a huge mouth, opened to receive the body and blood of the murdered man. The little red figure which represents the voice of Abel's blood steps on the rim of this pit; it is as if the blood which flowed into the mouth of the earth (the textual reference to which is written right next to this figure) has just taken shape and stepped into the light to cry out to God and denounce the murderer.<sup>159</sup> In other words, the iconographic elements under discussion are inspired by the biblical passage they illustrate, but they are the result of the painter's ability to invent images which vividly emphasize the moral aspect of the story in its florilegium context—in this case, the bloody murder for which Cain received God's curse.

Another example worthy of consideration appears on folio 327v: under the florilegium title which praises the value of good company, because one becomes like the people with whom one associates,<sup>160</sup> the queen of Sheba

is shown standing before an enthroned Solomon, who makes a speaking gesture (Fig. 28). Weitzmann observed that the relevant passage narrates how the queen praises Solomon for his wisdom and exclaims on the good fortune of his wives and servants who enjoy his company, so the painter should have depicted her, not Solomon, talking.<sup>161</sup> Moreover, he assumed that the queen is shown as if departing from the scene, so he concluded that the painter copied here a miniature which in his model would have illustrated 3 Kings 10:13, rather than verses 6–8, which are included in the florilegium. However, the queen's figure is comparable to other figures depicted in the same codex standing before an important person, with one hand covered as sign of reverence and the other extended in a speaking gesture (Fig. 29).<sup>162</sup> Because the queen seems to have both hands covered and directed toward the left side of her body, the balance shifts and her stance gives the impression that she is moving away from Solomon. Probably, the intention of the painter was rather to present her in veneration and amazement before the king. Solomon's speaking gesture was probably intended to allude to his wise words, which in the queen's opinion were superior to any she had ever heard in her own land.<sup>163</sup> In fact, the queen characterizes Solomon's words as a blessing for his entire audience;<sup>164</sup> so the painter probably chose to depict the king and not the queen speaking because he intended to illustrate the spirit rather than the letter of the relevant passage, in order to emphasize the value of good company mentioned in the corresponding florilegium title.

The material examined up to now demonstrates a dynamic relationship between word and image, which indicates that the painter of Parisinus 923 based his work on a careful reading of the passages he illustrated and that he intended to emphasize their moral message in

<sup>154</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 36. See also K. Weitzmann and M. Bernabò, *The Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint*, vol. 2, *Octateuchs: The Byzantine Octateuchs* (Princeton, 1999), 44–45, figs. 107–10, for the illustration of Genesis 4:9–15 in Byzantine Octateuchs.

<sup>155</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 36. The Jewish sources quoted by Weitzmann mention the burial of Abel's body and the restlessness of his soul.

<sup>156</sup> Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός τί ἐποίησας; φωνὴ αἵματος τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου βοᾷ πρὸς με ἐκ τῆς γῆς.

<sup>157</sup> Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 36) also related this figure to "the voice of Abel's blood" but believed that the Jewish legends explain the image more fully. Most of the original colors have flaked off this little image, but what still remains indicates that it was painted with an intense red outline.

<sup>158</sup> Καὶ νῦν ἐπικατάρατος σὺ ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, ἣ ἔχανεν τὸ στόμα αὐτῆς δέξασθαι τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς σου.

<sup>159</sup> In Fig. 27, I have highlighted the words CTOMA and AIMA, mouth (of the earth) and blood (of Abel).

<sup>160</sup> See above, n. 138.

<sup>161</sup> 3 Kings 10:6–8 (PG 96:349BC). Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 88, fig. 153.

<sup>162</sup> Besides the example shown here in Fig. 29, see also Jacob on fol. 368v, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 49. (These are only two of the many miniatures in which this pose is employed in cod. Paris. gr. 923.)

<sup>163</sup> 3 Kings 10:6–7. "Ἀληθινὸς ὁ λόγος, ὃν ἤκουσα ἐν τῇ γῇ μου περὶ τοῦ λόγου σου καὶ περὶ τῆς φρονήσεώς σου, καὶ οὐκ ἐπίστευσα τοῖς λαλοῦσίν μοι, ἕως ὅτου παρεγενόμην καὶ ἐωράκασιν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου, καὶ ἰδοὺ οὐκ ἔστιν τὸ ἥμισυ καθὼς ἀπήγγειλάν μοι, προστέθεικας ἀγαθὰ πρὸς αὐτὰ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ἀκοήν, ἣν ἤκουσα ἐν τῇ γῇ μου."

<sup>164</sup> 3 Kings 10:8. "Μακάριαι αἱ γυναῖκές σου, μακάριοι οἱ παῖδες σου οὗτοι οἱ παρεστηκότες ἐνώπιόν σου δι' ὅλου οἱ ἀκούοντες πᾶσαν τὴν φρόνησίν σου."

the context of the *Sacra Parallela* florilegium. He carried out this task with creativity and inventiveness; and the final results were images of eloquence and sophistication. None of the miniatures discussed up to now provides compelling proof for the use of illustrated manuscripts as models; on the contrary, many of the miniatures indicate the exact opposite: they are products of the painter's own imagination,<sup>165</sup> or they contain unparalleled iconographic details which make particular sense in the context of the *Sacra Parallela* florilegium and could easily have been lost in the process of copying if they had been included in the hypothetical models used by our painter.<sup>166</sup> However, this does not mean that the miniaturist of Parisinus 923 used no iconographic sources in his work; it simply indicates that we cannot explain everything through a model theory. Even when models can be reasonably hypothesized, the miniatures resulting from their use might be more than copies. For a resourceful artist like the *Sacra Parallela* painter, who often took liberties in the illustration of biblical and patristic texts and followed an interpretative approach, the alteration and elaboration of models could have been a regular practice. Obviously, the use of iconographic models is a major issue in the understanding of the method of production of a codex with such an extensive corpus of miniatures as the Paris *Sacra Parallela*. Moreover, the use of models is directly related to the question of the word-and-image relationship, and the examination of one issue in relation to the other can shed more light on both. This is the purpose of the next section.

### Iconographic Sources

The use of iconographic models by the *Sacra Parallela* painter has been discussed by a number of scholars,<sup>167</sup> but Weitzmann's specific interest in the re-creation of lost

<sup>165</sup> For example, the combination of the vine and the paralytic of Bethesda, the depiction of Basil and Gregory as protectors of their congregation, the group of monks praying above the nocturnal and diurnal occupations of men and animals, the body and soul of Abel in the scene of Cain's cursing by God.

<sup>166</sup> For example, the detailed characterization of the infirm in Christ's healing miracles, and of the various animals illustrating Job 38–39.

<sup>167</sup> For example, see Revel-Neher, "Problèmes iconographiques dans les *Sacra Parallela*" (n. 12 above), 7–12, and Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning* (n. 4 above), 75–77, 180–82, 371, 391.



**Fig. 28** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 327v, Solomon and the queen of Sheba (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 29** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 231v, God speaks to Elijah (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

**Fig. 30** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 212r, Christ heals the man born blind (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



archetypes led him to examine this issue at much greater length. In the introduction to his relevant monograph, he wrote: “There are many instances where a scene [in codex Parisinus graecus 923] has such a close iconographic parallel in an illustrated basic text that both must have a common archetype, which can only have been the manuscript with the complete cycle.”<sup>168</sup> Throughout his book Weitzmann mentioned iconographic parallels between miniatures of the *Sacra Parallela* and other codices that can be easily explained not by the use of a common archetype but by the fact that different painters can easily produce compositions which look alike when they illustrate the same text and employ formulaic iconographic elements (like speaking or praying figures).<sup>169</sup> Such examples will not be discussed here. I shall instead focus my attention on the cases in which Weitzmann identified striking iconographic similarities between miniatures of the *Sacra Parallela* and other manuscripts, similarities evident in particular details of the compositions, which seriously raise the question of the use of models. I shall also examine miniatures in which Weitzmann identified striking discrepancies between word and image in Parisinus 923, discrepancies that in his opinion can be better explained as the result

of inaccurate use of iconographic models. Because of the partial and problematic publication of the manuscript up to now, it is necessary to discuss such cases in order to clarify the actual relationship of word and image. My intention is not to discredit the hypothesis about the use of models but to qualify it, by investigating the evidence which allows us to have a better understanding of the various ways in which the *Sacra Parallela* artist may have used his sources. The material presented will provide further evidence on the dynamic relationship between word and image that characterizes his work.

Writing about the hypothetical Gospel model of the *Sacra Parallela* painter, Weitzmann mentioned the miniature with the healing of the man born blind as providing the strongest evidence of iconographic parallels deriving from a common archetype.<sup>170</sup> This miniature might indeed indicate the use of a model, but it also suggests that our painter was able to use his models in a creative rather than a slavish manner. On folio 212r Christ is shown touching this man’s eyes; the blind man is then depicted bending toward an architectural setting containing a basin, and washing his eyes according to Christ’s instructions (Fig. 30).<sup>171</sup> Weitzmann wrote that the blind man “bends over a vase which is placed

<sup>168</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 12.

<sup>169</sup> See Lowden, *Prophet Books* (n. 4 above), 70–71.

<sup>170</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 12, 182.

<sup>171</sup> John 9:6–7. PG 96:56B.

within a flat-roofed structure with a three-lobed opening. Here the painter has obviously misunderstood his model, because in it the cubic structure was actually the well.<sup>172</sup> Weitzmann assumed that our painter's model resembled the miniature depicting the same miracle in the sixth-century Rossano Gospels, where the poses of Christ and the blind man are similar to those in the *Sacra Parallela* miniature, and most importantly, the pool of Siloam is a cubic structure like the one in Parisinus 923 (but without the architectural details and the vase).<sup>173</sup> This similarity of shape between the two structures is indeed striking and could suggest the use of a model by our painter. However, accepting this hypothesis does not necessarily mean that we must see the differences between the "model" and the "derivative" as resulting from a misunderstanding of the former by the creator of the latter. Our painter may actually have been trying to improve his model, in accordance with his understanding of the ΚΟΛΥΜΒΗΘΑΝ ΤΟΥ ΚΛΑΟΑΜ mentioned in the text. The word ΚΟΛΥΜΒΗΘΑ does not mean "well," but either "pool" or "deep font/basin," like a baptismal font, in which someone can be immersed in water.<sup>174</sup> Perhaps our painter chose to apply the latter meaning to his miniature, and so he transformed the cubic structure seen in his model into a cubic building (as the architectural setting of Siloam) in which he depicted the ΚΟΛΥΜΒΗΘΑΝ as a deep basin. Of all the Gospel miracles represented on folios 211r–212v, this is the only miniature that could suggest the use of a model, but the specific way in which our painter may have used this hypothetical model is open to discussion. The evidence indicates a flexible use of models, by a painter who was critically selective and inventive, elaborating upon rather than slavishly or incompetently copying his archetypes.<sup>175</sup>

172 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 182.

173 Rossano Gospels (Rossano, Museo dell'Arcivescovado), fol. 7r; see G. Cavallo, *Codex Purpureus Rossanensis* (Rome, 1992), 84–85, pl. 11.

174 Liddell-Scott, s.v.: the word κολυμβήθρα comes from the word κολυμβος, which means *diver*.

175 This flexible use of models is a possibility Weitzmann himself considered when writing about Byzantine miniaturists in general in his *Roll and Codex* (n. 21 above), 171, 183, 185: "Not every deviation of a picture from the text is a pictorial corruption resulting from a misunderstanding of the model. One must also take into account the freedom and originality of an able miniaturist, who, dissatisfied with merely technical copying, likes to assume a writer's competence in narrating a scene in his own way and to deviate consciously from the text in one manner or another. . . . Whereas a text critic, in dealing with a later text, tries to

The same conclusions can be drawn from examination of the other major case of iconographic parallels that Weitzmann uses as a proof for the use of models by the *Sacra Parallela* painter. His argument develops around the miniatures that illustrate passages from the Book of Job. Especially miniatures from the first two chapters of Job are said to "agree so completely with the scenes in the ninth-century codex Vaticanus graecus 749 that there can be no doubt that the illustrator of the *Sacra Parallela* used an illustrated Job manuscript of the same pictorial recension as model."<sup>176</sup> The following analysis proposes a more nuanced approach to the material.

On folio 204v Job is depicted raising his hands in prayer, right below the scene of his children's death as described in Job 1:18–21 (Fig. 31). The relevant biblical passage does not appear in full in the *Sacra Parallela* text: the story is mentioned in an excerpt from a homily by Basil the Great, where Job is praised for not lamenting the death of his children when the devil caused a building to collapse upon them; instead he stoically accepted the event by declaring, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; it happened as the Lord decided; may the name of the Lord be praised for ever."<sup>177</sup> Basil's reference to this event is compiled under the title "On the dead and on the bereaved, and that we must not grieve for those who have departed."<sup>178</sup> The depiction of Job

sift it from later alterations in order to comprehend the spirit of the time of the author in its greatest possible purity, a picture critic has to judge a miniature cycle from two angles, namely, to reveal the spirit of the time of its origin as well as that of the period in which the actual copy was made, evaluating the two on a more equal basis. . . . In textual as well as in picture criticism one has to guard oneself against too stringent a method: just as in a text the best words are not always those which the author actually employed, but those which a later scribe substituted, so in the pictorial tradition the archetype may start out with certain conventions of types or compositions which a later copyist may be able to make more specific and closer to the words of the basic text or to its meaning than the first painter was able or willing to do." Unfortunately, Weitzmann disregarded such considerations in his *Sacra Parallela* monograph, where his aim was to construct hypothetical models, mostly through elements that he identified as copying mistakes. (See also Lowden, "Visual Knowledge" [n. 28 above], 65, for considerations which Weitzmann made in theory but did not follow in practice.)

176 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 12.

177 Basil quotes only this part of Job 1:21 (the second part of verse 21) and makes a very brief reference to the earthquake and the death of Job's children, which are described in more detail in Job 1:18–19.

178 ΠΕΡΙ ΘΑΝΟΝΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΕΝΘΟΥΝΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΟΤΙ ΟΥ ΔΕΙ ΕΠΙ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΑΠΕΛΘΟΝΤΩΝ ΠΕΝΘΕΙΝ (fol. 203r; in PG 96:28CD the title is slightly shorter; Basil's passage is in PG 96:41BC).

praising God below the pile of rubble in which his children are buried is a very strong visualization of the message of this title. Weitzmann noticed two main iconographic similarities between the *Sacra Parallela* miniature and the relevant scenes in Vaticanus graecus 749. First of all, in both manuscripts Job is shown praying in a similar pose, standing frontally with his hands raised and looking upwards.<sup>179</sup> However, this similarity cannot prove the use of a model by our painter, since this type of praying figure is used throughout the *Sacra Parallela* codex in various cases, as it is an iconographic topos (compare Figs. 31 and 74).<sup>180</sup> Moreover, in the Vatican codex Job's robe is torn, as described in Job 1:20,<sup>181</sup> while in the *Sacra Parallela* the figure is fully dressed in royal attire (as a sign of Job's wealth), precisely because Basil does not mention the biblical reference to Job tearing his garments in grief for his children's death. The homilist uses Job as an example of restrained behavior in the face of calamities, so it is logical that he does not refer to the tearing of his garment and the shaving of his head, but only to his praise of God in the last phrase of Job 1:21. When both the twentieth and twenty-first verses of Job 1 are excerpted in their entirety on another folio of the *Sacra Parallela*, the iconography is different: the man is again depicted with hands raised in prayer, but this time he is semi-naked, with some of his garments shown next to him (Fig. 32).<sup>182</sup> This iconographic choice reflects both Job's rending of his garments in grief for his children's death (Job 1:20) and the famous words that he uttered immediately afterwards (Job 1:21, first part): "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall depart."<sup>183</sup> In other words, the painter of the *Sacra*

*Parallela* was following the text he was illustrating rather than an illustrated codex of Job. It is quite improbable that in such a manuscript a fully dressed Job and a semi-naked one would have been used to illustrate two successive verses (Job 1:20–21), especially since, according to the text, Job tears his clothes in verse twenty and then prays to God in verse twenty-one; thus, in a sequence of images illustrating this narrative, he would presumably have been dressed in similar fashion.

On the other hand, one iconographic detail in the miniature showing the death of Job's children might suggest the use of a model for this particular scene, as Weitzmann suggested.<sup>184</sup> The miniature depicts a demon blowing a horn and thereby causing the earthquake that results in the destruction of Job's children (Fig. 31). In the Vatican codex, four demons are shown blowing horns and throwing stones at the people gathered around a banquet table, illustrating Job 1:18–19: "Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house."<sup>185</sup> In the Paris *Sacra Parallela* the depiction of only one demon could have been inspired by the specific way Basil the Great describes the event: instead of mentioning the mighty wind striking the four corners of the house (hence the four demons in the illustrated *Job* manuscripts), Basil says that the devil shook the house (hence only one demon is depicted carrying out the task). However, the fact that this demon is blowing a horn might suggest that our painter had seen an illustrated manuscript of Job.<sup>186</sup>

Two other scenes from Job's story appear on folio 257r of the *Sacra Parallela*, following the figure of the

179 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 112. This miniature of cod. Vat. gr. 749, fol. 21v, is reproduced in Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe* (n. 32 above), fig. 61.

180 See, for example, Moses on fol. 161v and Ahab on fol. 14v (reproduced in Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 54, 165b).

181 The difference is also mentioned by Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 112.

182 Fol. 256v. Here the passage from Job is excerpted under the title "On divine castigation and on those who accept what is to come gladly and with dignity" (for the Greek text see n. 67, above). Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 112, observed that this title is not included in the PG, but in reality it appears in both the Vatican and the Rupefucaldian recensions of the florilegium (see n. 67, above). In the fully published recension (Vatican) the passages compiled are somewhat different; for example, some of the passages from Job included in cod. Paris. gr. 923 are omitted.

183 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 112, noted that no surviving illustrated Book of Job places such an emphasis on Job's nakedness when illustrating this part of the text.

184 Ibid., 112.

185 Fol. 20r. Image reproduced in Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe*, fig. 48.

186 On the other hand, it cannot be excluded that the painter depicted the demon blowing a horn because he was familiar with the biblical reference to the disastrous wind, and decided to transform the formulaic personification of the wind blowing his horn into a demon performing the same task—to reflect Basil's reference to the devil as responsible for the disaster. Compare, for example, the personification of the silenced wind holding his horn downward to indicate his obedience to Christ, in the representation of the miracle of the silencing of the storm in Lake Tiberias, in the 9th-century Chludov Psalter, fol. 88r, Ščepkina, *Miniatury Khudovskoi Psaltiri* (n. 71 above). In the Byzantine Job manuscripts, the demons causing the earthquake do not have wings, in contrast to the one in the *Sacra Parallela* miniature (Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 112). In this codex all the demons are winged (for example, the ones confronted or expelled by Christ, folios 123r, 211v–212v, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 398, 412, 428, 443, 447).



seminaked Job resigned to God's will on folio 256r. In the first miniature, Job is talking with his wife, who deplores his state; he instructs her that humans should accept everything God gives, whether it causes happiness or misery (Fig. 33, top).<sup>187</sup> According to the detailed description of Job's condition in verse 9 of the Septuagint (fully excerpted in our manuscript), he is seated on a pile of dung, his body full of sores infested by worms.<sup>188</sup> All these details are included in the *Sacra Parallela* miniature, where Job is portrayed against a dark hill (the pile of dung), and strokes of black paint on his skin indicate his sores, while strokes of white paint on and around his body represent the worms growing in his festering wounds. Very similar depictions survive in illustrated manuscripts of Job, for example codex Vaticanus 749, where not only the black sores and the white worms but also the pile of dung in which Job's figure is circumscribed, and even the weeds growing from the contour of the pile, can be seen in various miniatures.<sup>189</sup> Once more, it seems that the *Sacra Parallela* painter could indeed have seen such a codex. In fact, Massimo Bernabò has proposed that this *Sacra Parallela* miniature was copied after the same scene of dialogue between Job and his wife from an illustrated Book of Job like Vaticanus 749 (or this very codex); but he has also observed that the *Sacra Parallela* painter improved upon his model by representing the woman using a speaking gesture, which emphasizes her dialogue with her husband (a detail not included in the archetype).<sup>190</sup>

**187** Job 2:9–10. This passage is not included under the relevant title ("On divine castigation") in PG 96:313AB.

**188** This detailed description is not included in the King James version of the Bible.

**189** For example, see Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe*, figs. 99–114. Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 112–13) did not mention these similarities, and he discussed only the general iconography of Job's wife talking to him.

**190** Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe*, 155. In contrast, Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 112) thought that because the woman is making the speaking gesture with her left rather than right hand, she is a mirror reversal of the hypothetical image that the painter used as model. In my opinion, the *Sacra Parallela* miniaturist need not have copied exactly the same episode from the illustrated Job manuscript he might have used as model. He could have been inspired by any representation of Job on the pile of dung, and added the image of his wife next to him. For example, the specific shape of the dung pile and weeds seen in the *Sacra Parallela* miniature appears in images of cod. Vat. gr. 749 that belong to the last part of the codex (and do not include the episode of the dialogue between Job and his wife); see Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe*, figs. 104–6, 108–12, 114–15 (compare figs. 85 and 92 in which both the dung pile and weeds are different; in figs. 97, 99–103, 107, and 113 there are no weeds around the dung pile).

In the next miniature, Job is shown lying on the ground full of sores and then getting to his feet, clothing and girding himself according to God's command (Fig. 33, bottom).<sup>191</sup> According to the Bible, shortly after this event Job would be fully restored to his original happy life. The difference between the recumbent figure of Job afflicted with sores and the standing, clothed one does indeed give the impression of transferral from misery to rehabilitation. This is also the message of the Job passage compiled in our manuscript right before the excerpt illustrated here: "Blessed is the person God corrects. So don't hate the admonition of the almighty. He wounds, and then restores, he strikes, but then his hands heal."<sup>192</sup> Right next to this passage, the hand of God comes out of the sky and orders Job to get up and dress. The proximity of Job 5:17–18 to the hand of God that belongs to the illustration of the next passage (Job 40:6–8), suggests that this was indeed the healing hand that would restore Job to his former health and well-being. In the sequence of miniatures on folios 256v–257r (Figs. 32–33), Job first takes off his clothes, as a sign of submission to the calamities brought upon him by God; he is then shown seminaked and covered with wounds but still stoically enduring his sufferings; and he is finally restored and reclothed, rewarded for his faith in God. The sequence vividly complements the moral message of the relevant title under which the passages are compiled: those who bear divine castigation with dignity and patience will be rewarded and saved.<sup>193</sup> Of the three miniatures, only the one with Job on the dung pile might suggest familiarity with an illustrated Book of Job; the other two have no parallels in the surviving images in any medium. The same is true for the image of Job pointing toward a corpse lying in a dark pit, an illustration of Job 7:9, where it is said that there is no return from Hades.<sup>194</sup>

As a final point, the animals depicted on folio 198r (Fig. 16) are the most detailed illustrations of Job 38–39

**191** Job 40:6–8. (This passage is not included under the relevant title in PG 96:313AB.) Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 113) identifies this passage with Job 38:1, 3, which is similar but not the same.

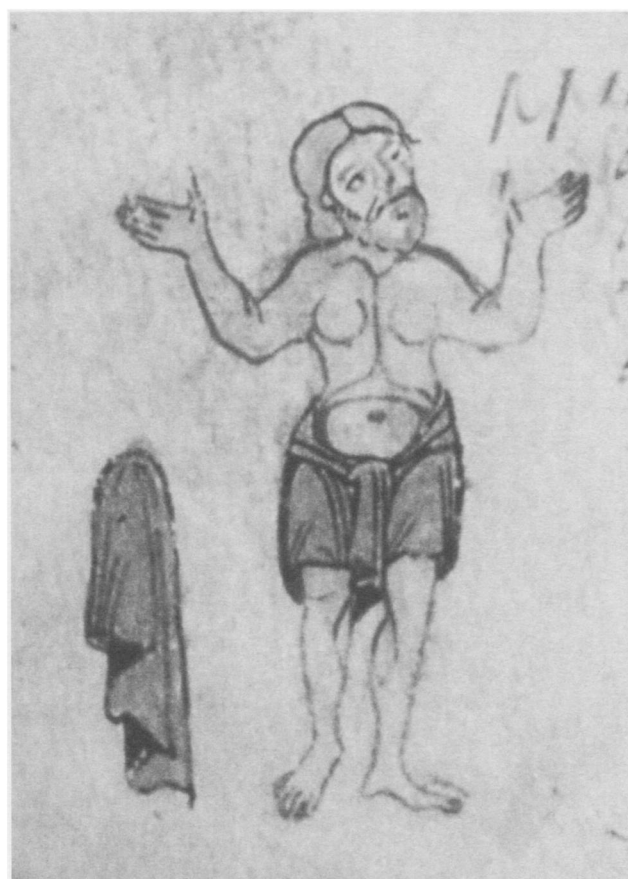
**192** Job 5:17–18 (this passage is included under the relevant title in PG 96:313AB).

**193** See n. 67, above.

**194** Fol. 30v, passage compiled under the title "On death and the conditions in Hades," also in PG 96:28A. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 113, fig. 219. It should be noted here that if this image had been copied from an illustrated Job codex, Job would be represented seminaked and full of sores (as he is in chapter 7) and not fully dressed and healthy.



**Fig. 31** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 204v, death of Job's children; Job prays to God (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 32** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 256v, Job prays to God (Job 1:20–21) (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 33** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 257r, Job reproves his wife, and Job gets dressed according to God's instructions (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

in the surviving corpus of Byzantine art, and, as already noted, they seem to be based on a very attentive reading of the biblical passage rather than on pre-existing models. In fact, these zoological miniatures are the earliest surviving illustrations of Job 38–39: the ninth-century Vaticanus 749 does not contain relevant miniatures, while Patmiacus 171 (of the late ninth to early tenth century) was illustrated with such miniatures only in the eleventh century.<sup>195</sup> Therefore, even if the *Sacra Parallela* painter had used an illustrated Book of Job like Vaticanus 749, he might have had to invent the animal miniatures anyway, as they were probably absent from his model.<sup>196</sup> In Weitzmann's view, there are discrepancies between the text and the illustration in this part of Parisinus 923 which indicate the incorrect use of an archetype,<sup>197</sup> but closer examination of his arguments does not support this conclusion.<sup>198</sup> The painter depicted exactly what was mentioned in the relevant passages, and his uniquely detailed characterization of the animals indicates that he created the miniatures ad hoc, in order to emphasize the attributes of "irrational beasts adorned with natural wisdom," as the relevant florilegium title observes.

The above analysis leads to the following conclusions. Only the horn blown by the demon at the earthquake scene and the depiction of Job seated on the dung pile and covered with sores have close iconographic parallels in illustrated Job manuscripts that might suggest the use of models by the *Sacra Parallela* painter (Figs. 31, 33 top).

195 Bernabò, *Libro di Giobbe*, 144–47, 156, figs. 123–27.

196 Bernabò (ibid., 156) noticed the absence of zoological miniatures in 9th-century books of Job and concluded that the birds on fol. 198r of Parisinus 923 are original creations of its miniaturist, not dependent on any model. I would argue that this observation should be extended to all animals on fol. 198r of the *Sacra Parallela* and not just birds.

197 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 116.

198 The painter depicted Job above the animals, turned toward the text and making a speaking gesture, because his name appears in the identification title of the relevant passages (ΙΩΒ), and this seems to have inspired the miniaturist to create an author-type portrait of him. In contrast, Weitzmann thought that this portrait was mistakenly copied from a hypothetical model codex where it illustrated Job 40:3 (not included in the *Sacra Parallela*). The animal depicted between the raven and the ass is the deer mentioned in the adjacent passage (Job 39:1–3). Weitzmann, however, identified it as a goat (even though it has antlers and not horns, and its fur is marked by spots and not patches of different colors), and thought that it was also copied by mistake from the model codex at a passage not included in Parisinus 923. In fact, the passage is included, but it mentions not a goat (found in the King James version of Job 39:1–3 used by Weitzmann) but the fantastic animal τραγέλαφος ("goat-deer"), which the painter omitted in favor of the more familiar ἔλαφος ("deer").

All the other miniatures can be fully justified as attentive visual renderings of the relevant biblical passages. They sometimes follow widespread iconographic formulae,<sup>199</sup> but in most cases they do not have iconographic parallels in illustrated manuscripts of Job, where the attention to detail and the literal illustration of textual elements found in the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures is not matched. Consequently, if our painter was indeed using an illustrated Book of Job, he was not slavishly copying from it every single miniature he had to paint. He was resorting to it occasionally, either to borrow an eloquent iconographic detail (like the horn blown by the demon) or to imitate the formulaic—almost emblematic—composition of Job on the dung pile; but mostly he was basing his images on an attentive reading of the passages from Job in the context of the *Sacra Parallela* florilegium. As a result, he produced miniatures that could not possibly exist in his model (like one of the two figures illustrating Job 1:20–21, the fully dressed or seminaked Job).<sup>200</sup>

Another case worthy of consideration is the illustration of passages with zoological references from St. Basil's *Hexameron*, compiled under the *Sacra Parallela* titles "On strange and rare things,"<sup>201</sup> and "On irrational beasts adorned with natural wisdom."<sup>202</sup> In most cases the painter has simply depicted the animals as described by Basil, so there is no indication of the use of a model. However, in a few cases Weitzmann noticed characteristics of the depicted animals not accounted for by Basil's description; so he hypothesized that our painter was using a codex in which Basil's zoological references were illustrated on the basis of miniatures found in a copy of the third-century text *Characteristics of Animals* by

199 Such as predator birds with widespread wings and horses with one foreleg raised as in a parade (Fig. 16), and praying figures looking upwards with both hands raised (Figs. 31, 32).

200 Bernabò (*Libro di Giobbe* [n. 32 above], 14, 155–56) accepted Weitzmann's proposal about the dependence of the *Sacra Parallela* Job miniatures on an illustrated Book of Job, but he observed, acutely, that these *Sacra Parallela* miniatures are often free adaptations of the scenes included in this hypothetical model, or even new creations (like Job pointing to a grave, and the birds illustrating passages from Job 38–39). He also noted that, because certain New Testament figures of Parisinus 923 appear in similar seated poses and speaking gestures as figures in cod. Vat. gr. 749, the painter of the *Sacra Parallela* must have used this codex (or a similar one) as a source of iconographic types. However, it is perhaps more reasonable to assume that these similarities indicate the widespread use of iconographic formulae rather than the dependence of one manuscript on another.

201 See PG 96:204B/205A–C.

202 See PG 95:1569C/1572B–1581D.

Claudius Aelianus.<sup>203</sup> First of all, it should be noted that the *Sacra Parallela* painter could have derived such miniatures directly from the zoological book itself, rather than from an illustrated homiliary of Basil. In other words, the miniatures in question cannot prove that such a patristic codex was known to our painter—and no such illustrated Byzantine manuscript survives today.<sup>204</sup> However, it is worth examining the miniatures to see if the copying of zoological models can be substantiated.

In the first from the top miniature of folio 200r, cranes are shown sleeping or mounting guard while standing on one leg (Fig. 34). This characteristic pose is mentioned, not by Basil, but by Aelianus;<sup>205</sup> however, it is also possible that through his everyday life experience the painter was aware of the habit cranes have to stand on one leg. Allusions to cranes in a variety of Byzantine texts attests that this bird was very familiar to the Byzantines.<sup>206</sup> Moreover, while Aelianus mentions that cranes

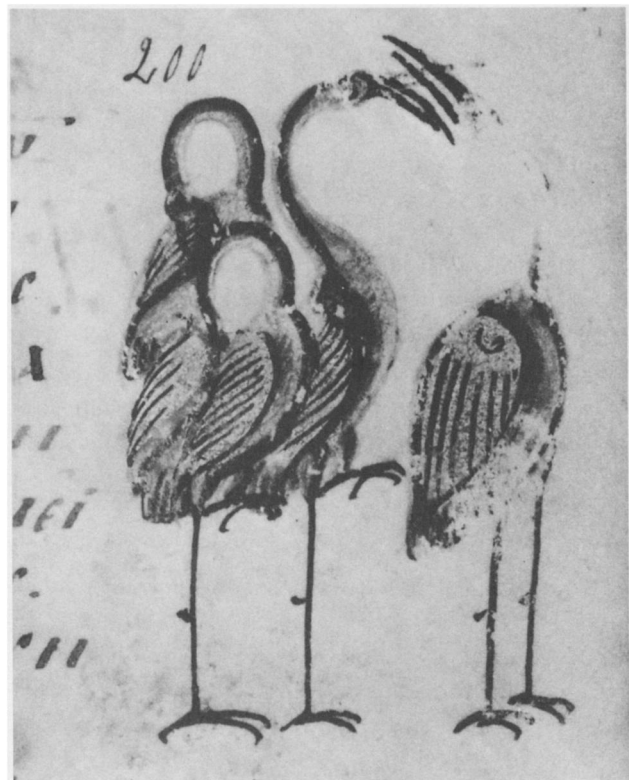


Fig. 34 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 200r, cranes guard their sleeping companions (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

203 Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 205–10) related all the zoological miniatures to an illustrated copy of the *Characteristics of Animals*, even when Basil's description provides all the details depicted by the painter. On Aelianus see ODB 1:27.

204 The same goes for the miniature of the viper eaten up by her newborn babies (an example used to illustrate the disastrous results of usury): her semihuman form, not mentioned by Basil in his homily on Psalm 14, could have been derived directly from an illustrated *Physiologus* (or other sources that reflected the same legendary belief), rather than from an illustrated codex containing Basil's homilies on the Psalms (no illustrated copy of which survives today). See Weitzmann's discussion of this miniature in *Sacra Parallela*, 211.

205 Compare PG 95:1576CD to *De natura animalium* 3.13:31–39, ed. R. Hercher, *Claudii Aeliani de natura animalium libri xvii, varia historia, epistolae, fragmenta*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1864, repr. 1971).

206 The fact that cranes were common in the Eastern Mediterranean during antiquity is well attested in various sources like the *Geranomachia* myth, Aesop's fables about this bird, Aristotle's frequent use of cranes as a typical example of animals living in groups and having leaders, etc.; he compares cranes with animals like swans, bees, or man himself; see Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* in various sources like the myth, 488a, 597b, ed. P. Louis, *Aristote: Histoire des animaux*, vols. 1–3 (Paris, 1964–69). Frequent references to cranes continue in the late antique and Byzantine periods. For example, early Christian authors often mention the migration habits of cranes and their natural instinct to sense the change of seasons; see, e.g., Basil the Great, *Epistulae* 193.1.1–5 (where Basil writes that unfortunately he cannot migrate to warmer climates as cranes do), ed. Y. Courtonne, *Saint Basile: Lettres*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1957–66), and John Chrysostom, *Fragmenta in Jeremiam*, PG 64:741C, 845C. Asterius mentions the collective efforts of cranes to protect members of their flock from attack and contrasts them to men's lack of solidarity; see his Homily 1.6.2.8–10, ed. C. Datema, *Asterius of Amasea: Homilies i–xiv* (Leiden, 1970). In *De vita et miraculis sanctae Theclae* #2, cranes are described eating in the court of the saint's church near Seleukia together with other birds (swans, geese, and doves), and one of them becomes the saint's agent

watching over their sleeping kin usually stand on one leg, holding a stone with the other foot (so that if they fall asleep, the dropped stone wakes them up),<sup>207</sup> the *Sacra Parallela* painter has depicted both sleeping and watchful cranes standing on one leg and has not shown any stones in their claws. Weitzmann did not mention these differences, which he would probably attribute to

when it pokes the eye of a child, who is healed thereby instead of being injured; see 2.24.21–49, ed. G. Dagron, *Vie et miracles de sainte Thècle* (Brussels, 1978). Michael Psellos mentions the imperial hunt of cranes in *Chronographia* 72.9–11, ed. É. Renauld, *Michel Psellos: Chronographie ou histoire d'un siècle de Byzance (976–1077)*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1926, 1928, repr. 1967). The fact that the 9th-century author Georgios Choeroboskos uses the word γέρανος ("crane") in his grammatical observations (together with words as common as οὐρανός and στέφανος, "sky" and "wreath") could be taken as an indication that the word was common, and so was the bird denoted by it. See *Epimerismi in Psalmos*, p. 79:8, 13, ed. T. Gaisford, *Georgii Choeroboski epimerismi in Psalmos*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1842). Obviously, the above list of references is selective, not exhaustive.

207 See the reference in n. 205, above.





Fig. 35 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 200r, cranes fly in formation (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

the painter's misunderstanding of his model.<sup>208</sup> However, a simpler explanation might be that the *Sacra Parallela* miniaturist was not aware of Aelianus's detailed description, nor of any miniatures accompanying his text, but only knew that cranes are accustomed to stand on one leg; so he depicted them in this characteristic pose without taking into account the difference between sleeping and watchful birds.

The second miniature on the same folio depicts cranes flying in formation as described by Basil (Fig. 35): he mentions that their flight is well ordered and that one bird leads the way. Weitzmann assumed that in this miniature appears a feature which is discussed only by Aelianus, who wrote: "Resting their bills upon each other's tail feathers they form in a sense a continuous chain of flight, and sweeten their labor as they repose gently one upon another." According to Weitzmann "the two flying cranes at the rear clearly touch with their beaks the tails of those flying ahead of them, and if these in turn do not touch

the tail of the leading crane, it is apparently only for lack of space."<sup>209</sup> In fact, not the two cranes at the rear but the two cranes at the right of the composition seem to be flying as described by Aelianus; however, this seems to be accidental, for their figures are superimposed so that it seems that one is touching the other's tail. The three cranes on their left are obviously not flying in the way Aelianus describes: the beaks of the last two birds are shown close to the wings rather than the tails of the birds flying in front of them. In other words, the depiction of cranes in the *Sacra Parallela* cannot be proved to depend on an illustrated copy of the *Characteristics of Animals*.

The same is true in the case of the miniature which on folio 247v illustrates Basil's reference to the EXENHIC, the sucking-fish which is able to hold a ship fast in the sea, causing despair to the passengers.<sup>210</sup> Although Basil mentions a small fish (MIKPON IXΘΥΔION), Weitzmann argued that the painter has depicted a long eel, in accordance with Aelianus's description of this animal.<sup>211</sup> However, this folio and the miniature are very damaged,<sup>212</sup> and what Weitzmann interprets as an eel could equally well be the schematic depiction of waves as curvy lines against the bottom part of the boat, similarly depicted in well-preserved miniatures of the *Sacra Parallela*.<sup>213</sup> It is impossible to state with certainty how the EXENHIC was represented in the miniature under discussion.

Weitzmann's strongest argument in support of his hypothesis that the animals illustrating Basil's homilies derive from an illustrated Aelianus codex seems to be his analysis of the representation of nest-building swallows on folio 200v (Fig. 36). Two birds are shown carrying straw in their beaks, while a third is lifting mud with its claws and a fourth is flying from the nest back to the ground. According to Weitzmann, the passage illustrated in our codex reads (my italics; cf. my translation, below): "as she [the swallow] cannot raise the mud in her claws, she moistens *the end of her wings* in water and

208 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 209.

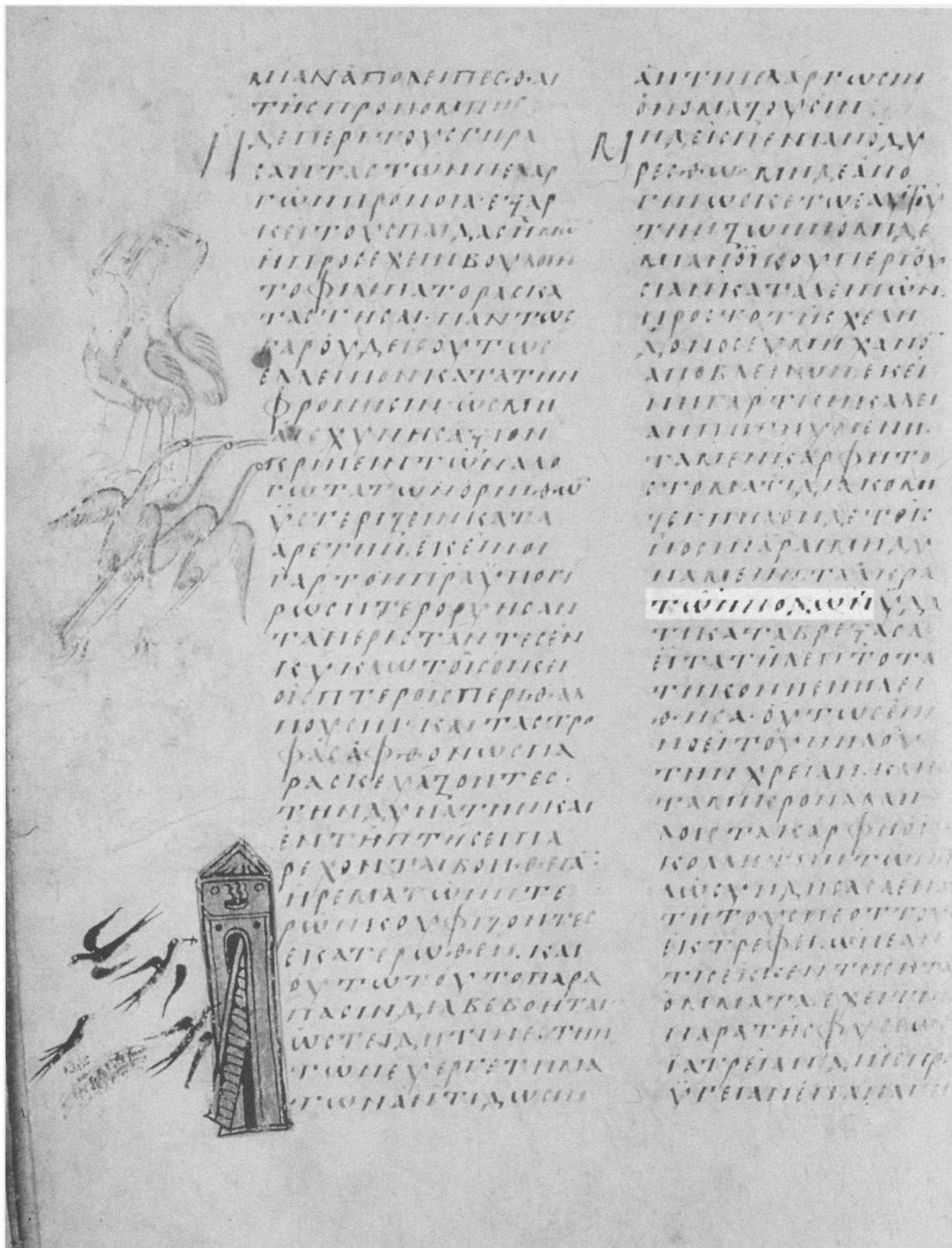
209 Ibid.

210 See PG 96:205C. The miniature is reproduced in Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 552.

211 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 207.

212 The parchment is torn right in the middle of the miniature and the colors have been rubbed off and are very faded.

213 For example, compare the representation of ships in a sea storm on fol. 207r, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 203.



**Fig. 36** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 200v, storks protect their parents and swallows build a nest (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

then rolls in very fine dust and thus procures mud.”<sup>214</sup> Consequently, Weitzmann claimed that the image of the swallow lifting mud with her claws instead of her wings contradicts Basil’s description. He explained this incongruity by hypothesizing that the miniature derives from an illustrated Aelianus manuscript, where indeed swallows are said to lift mud with their claws.<sup>215</sup> However, Weitzmann based his argument on the wrong text: he translated Basil’s excerpt, not as it appears in our *Sacra Parallela* copy or even in the Patrologia edition of the *Sacra Parallela*,<sup>216</sup> but as it appears in the Patrologia edition of Basil’s complete homily on the *Hexaemeron*.<sup>217</sup> In our manuscript the text says exactly what the miniaturist has depicted: ΠΗΛΟΝ ΔΕ ΤΟΙΣ / ΠΟCΙΝ ΑΡΑΙ ΜΗ ΔΥ/ΝΑΜΕΝΗ, ΤΑ ΑΚΡΑ / ΤΩΝ ΠΟΔΩΝ ΥΔΑ/ΤΙ ΚΑΤΑΒΡΕΞΑCΑ / ΕΙΤΑ ΤΗ ΛΕΠΙΤΟΤΑ/ΤΗ ΚΟΝΗ ΕΝΗΛΕΙ/ΘΗCΑ. ΟΥΤΩC ΕΠΙ / ΝΟΕΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΗΛΟΥ / ΤΗΝ ΧΡΕΙΑΝ.<sup>218</sup> “Whenever she cannot raise mud with her feet [I suppose because there is not any available], she moistens the extremities of her feet in water and then steps in very fine dust and thus procures mud.” According to the above analysis, it cannot be proved that the zoological miniatures of Parisinus 923 derive directly or indirectly from an illustrated copy of the *Characteristics of Animals*; nor is there evidence to suggest the use of illustrated codices with homilies of Basil the Great as sources of the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures.<sup>219</sup>

The miniatures illustrating passages by Gregory Nazianzenus present us with a similar case: although Weitzmann hypothesized the existence of models for all of them,<sup>220</sup> most miniatures can be fully explained by the narrative contained in the illustrated excerpts; there is no need to resort to hypothetical models in order to justify the iconographic elements of the compositions. The only exception to this rule seems to be the illustration of an episode from St. Basil’s life described by

Gregory Nazianzenus in his funerary oration in honor of his friend. In this case, Weitzmann identified elements that in his view are explainable only as copying mistakes and consequently support the hypothesis that the *Sacra Parallela* painter was consulting an illustrated codex with Gregory’s homilies. In the following analysis I shall propose a more nuanced approach to this issue.

On folios 299v–300r appear two miniatures that were both considered by Weitzmann to be illustrations of the widow’s story mentioned in the funerary oration of Gregory Nazianzenus for Basil the Great (Figs. 37–40). According to the text, a widow sought asylum in the sanctuary of Basil’s church in order to avoid a judge’s assessor who wanted to force her into marrying him.<sup>221</sup> This excerpt is compiled under the title “On sanctuary and on those who seek refuge in holy places; that we must help the innocent and send away the guilty.”<sup>222</sup> The miniature on folio 299v shows a man outside a church, inside which another figure is seeking asylum (Figs. 37, 39). The topmost miniature on folio 300r shows a man surrounded by people carrying sticks and facing Basil, who steps out of his church in order to protect the widow shown inside the building (Figs. 38, 40).<sup>223</sup> Concerning the person represented inside the church sanctuary in the first miniature (Fig. 39), Weitzmann commented that “this figure’s lack of a covering veil and what seems to be a short beard indicate that the artist misunderstood his model, because in the next scene the person in the same place is clearly characterized as the widow.”<sup>224</sup> The more logical explanation is that indeed a man and not a woman is represented in the first case, because the miniature is not illustrating the widow’s story but two biblical excerpts that appear under the same title (“On sanctuary . . .”) on folio 299v.<sup>225</sup> The first passage reads:

221 For the full story see PG 36:568–69. The excerpt which appears in PG 96:305C–308A is longer than the one compiled in cod. Paris. gr. 923, where all the lines published in PG 96:308A are missing, except the first one.

222 Fol. 299v: ΠΕΡΙ ΠΡΟCΦΥΓΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟCΦΕΥΓΟΝΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΙΕΡΟΙC ΤΟΠΟΙC. ΟΤΙ ΧΡΗ ΤΟΙC ΜΕΝ ΕΥΘΥΝΟΙC ΒΟΗΘΕΙΝ ΤΟΥC ΔΕ ΥΠΑΙΤΙΟΥC ΑΠΟΠΕΜΠΕCΘΑΙ. Obviously the scribe made a mistake, and instead of writing ΑΝΕΥΘΥΝΟΙC (“innocent”) he wrote ΕΥΘΥΝΟΙC (“guilty”). The correct reading is found in PG 96:305C.

223 For close-ups of the miniatures see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 646–47.

224 Ibid., 230.

225 When folios 299v–300r are seen in their entirety, this becomes immediately apparent, because of the position of the two miniatures on

214 Ibid., 209; see fig. 558 for a close-up of the miniature.

215 Ibid., 210.

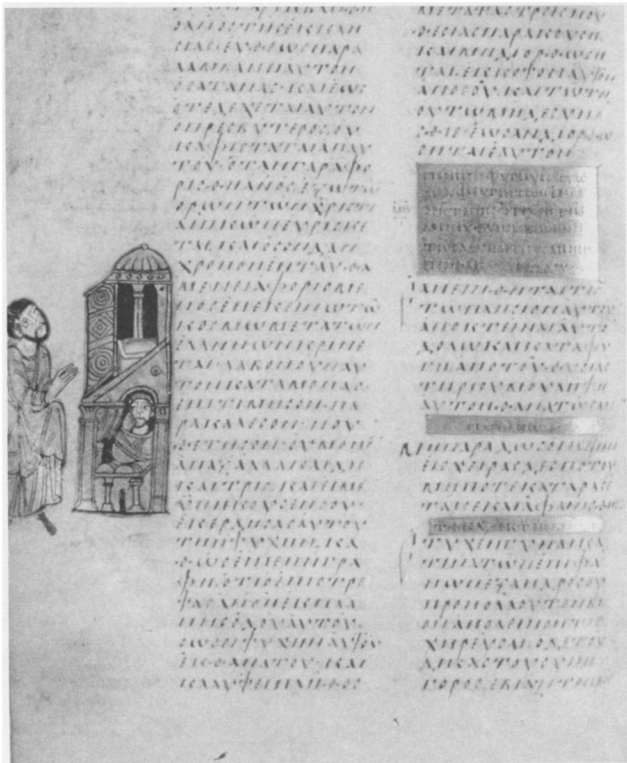
216 PG 95:1577C.

217 PG 29b:176D–177A.

218 The only difference between PG 29b:176D–177A (Basil’s homily on the *Hexaemeron*) and the text in our *Sacra Parallela* is that the word ποδῶν has been replaced by the word πτερῶν (“wings”). In Fig. 36, I have highlighted the words ΤΩΝ ΠΟΔΩΝ.

219 For a description of other narrative miniatures illustrating passages from Basil’s works in this codex, see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 210–13.

220 Ibid., 228–36.



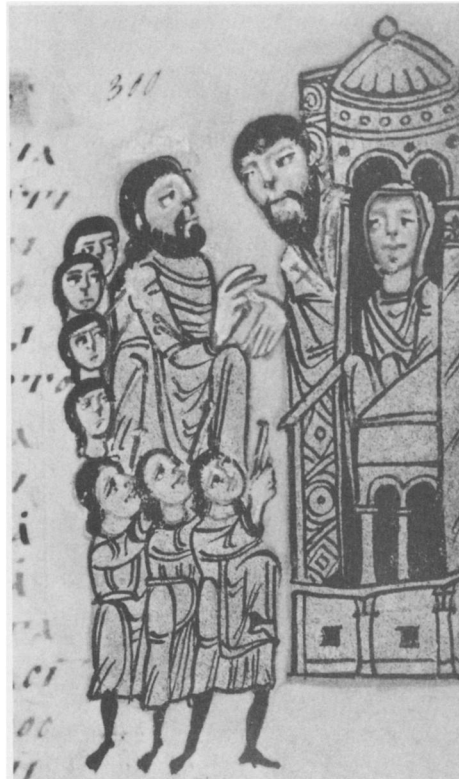
**Fig. 37** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 299v, man seeks sanctuary in a church (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 38** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 300r, St. Basil protects the widow and St. John Chrysostom converses with Eutropios (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 39** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 299v, man seeks sanctuary in a church (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 40** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 300r, St. Basil protects the widow (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

“If a person kills a fellow human deceitfully and then seeks sanctuary, take him away from my altar and kill him.”<sup>226</sup> The second passage reads: “Do not surrender a servant to his master, because he might curse you and you will be ruined.”<sup>227</sup> The miniature which appears at the outer margin of this folio, on the same level as these two biblical passages, could be indeed related to both of them. The troubled asylum seeker inside the church could be either a guilty man or a servant worrying about his future; the perplexed man outside the church seems to be wondering about the refugee’s status and pondering whether or not to violate the sanctuary.

The passage referring to Basil and the widow starts at the bottom of folio 299v (at a lower level in relation to the miniature just discussed), and takes up one entire column of text on folio 300r. According to Weitzmann, the miniature of folio 300r (Figs. 38, 40) refers to episodes of the story that are not included in the relevant excerpt of our florilegium: the intervention of the judge who took Basil to court and stripped him of his episcopal garments, and the reaction of the enraged citizens, both men and women, who attacked the judge with any kind of weapon or tool they had at hand in order to protect their bishop. But since no courtroom is represented, and Basil, who is leaning out of his church, still wears his phelonion and omophorion, while the people around the prominent male figure whom Weitzmann identifies with the judge are carrying sticks, the scholar asserted, “At face value this miniature lacks clarity of narration; only after disentangling the conflated actions can its meaning be understood.”<sup>228</sup>

In fact, if one considers that this miniature is the only one to illustrate the widow’s story, it becomes clear that it corresponds to the events discussed in the existing excerpt and not to other episodes omitted from the *Sacra Parallela*: the painter simply represented the widow seeking asylum in the sanctuary, and Basil stepping out

from the church to confront the assessor who is coming after her, presumably with some people who would help him achieve his goal by force. Gregory does not describe in detail this confrontation but declares that Basil was prepared to go to any lengths to defend the widow.<sup>229</sup> Perhaps the painter took the liberty of representing a group of aggressive men around the assessor (and not men and women, i.e., the citizens who would later defend Basil from the judge), in order to emphasize the danger that the bishop faced and consequently his courageous stance in protecting the widow and defending the sanctity of the asylum offered by the church sanctuary.<sup>230</sup> In fact, Gregory mentions in his homily that the judge sent some men to search Basil’s residence (which apparently was annexed to the church), obviously in an effort to intimidate the bishop;<sup>231</sup> later on, when Basil was taken to his court, the judge threatened to torture him.<sup>232</sup> Our painter might have been inspired by these references to depict the threatening men with cudgels glaring at Basil. The part of the homily containing these details is not included in the Paris *Sacra Parallela*, but the fact that the passage compiled in the codex ends with the common phrase KAI TA ΛΟΙΠΑ (et cetera) suggests that this story was so well known to the people who made and used this manuscript that there was no need to report it in its entirety (or to look at a model in order to be able to illustrate it). Since this homily was read every year in church on the feast day of St. Basil (January 1st), it was certainly familiar to the congregation.<sup>233</sup>

An examination of the surviving miniatures that illustrate this story in other Byzantine manuscripts may clarify whether a common archetype might have influenced our *Sacra Parallela* painter, as Weitzmann assumed. The ninth-century codex Ambrosianus E 49–50 does not include any relevant miniatures. By contrast, the

the pages; but when seen in Weitzmann’s monograph, isolated from their context and next to each other, the two miniatures can indeed seem like illustrations of the same text, especially because the church is represented similarly in both of them. In fact, this similarity provides further evidence that the painter was not copying these miniatures from models, which would have come from two different codices (containing biblical and patristic texts respectively) and therefore would probably have dissimilar depictions of architectural settings. See also below, pp. 177–79.

226 Exodus 21:14. PG 96:305C.

227 Proverbs 30:10. PG 96:305C.

228 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 230–31.

229 PG 96:305D (PG 36:568A).

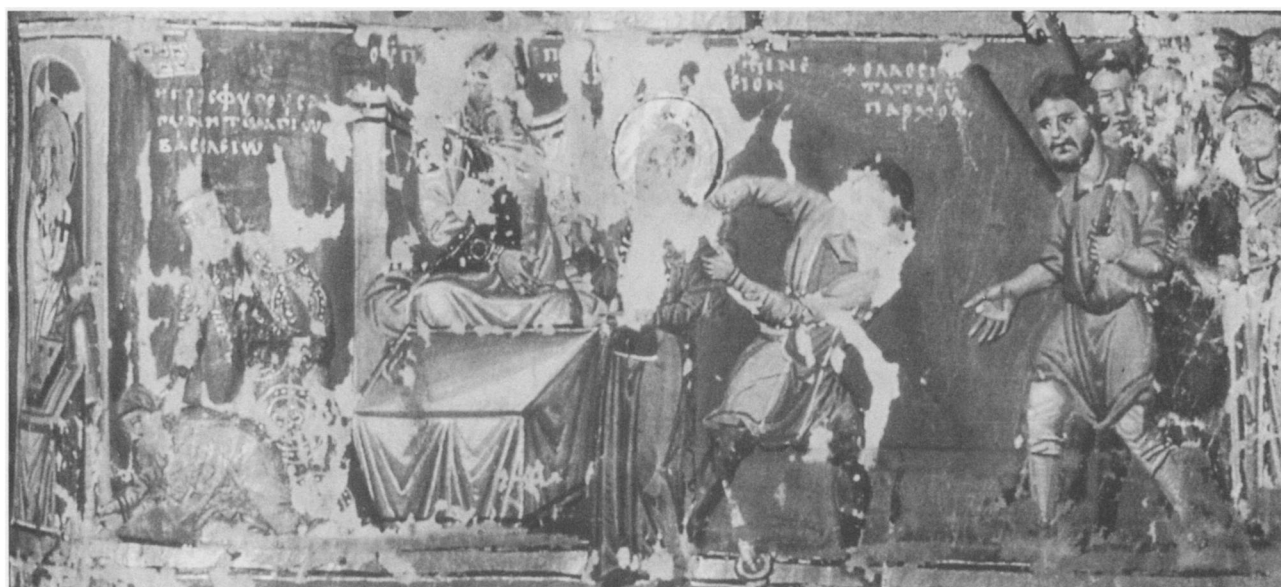
230 Weitzmann himself mentioned: “Since Gregory is primarily interested in reactions to the story rather than in the story as such, and is not specific on the nature of the confrontation between the assessor and the widow, the illustrator was left to his imagination in casting this event into pictorial form.” Weitzmann made this comment in relation to the miniature on folio 299v, which he considered to be the first to illustrate the story of the widow, but his observations fit perfectly well the one and only miniature of this story, which appears on folio 300r. See Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 230.

231 PG 96:308A (PG 36:568B).

232 PG 36:568C.

233 See G. Galavaris, *The Illustrations of the Liturgical Homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus* (Princeton, 1969), 11.





**Fig. 41** Cod. Paris. gr. 510, fol. 104r, St. Basil protects the widow, St. Basil is brought to the judge, and citizens attack the court (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

ninth-century Parisinus graecus 510 preserves the most complete and accurate illustrations of the story known today (Fig. 41). On folio 104r, various episodes from Basil's life are illustrated with great attention to detail.<sup>234</sup> The widow's story takes up the entire third (from the top) register: at the far left, Basil is standing behind a church altar and the widow is kneeling before it, while the judge's assessor, a youthful figure dressed in costly garments, is reaching for her. In the next scene the judge, an elderly figure in official attire (a chlamys with tablion), is seated behind a table, obviously in court. To the right, a servant has already stripped Basil of his phelonion and omophorion. To the far right, the enraged citizens are approaching to defend their bishop, the men in the foreground holding clubs. This is the only surviving miniature of the event in which women are depicted as well, in accordance with Gregory's description—in which it is particularly emphasized that citizens of both sexes run to Basil's rescue.<sup>235</sup> All later illustrations are less detailed or include different details in the miniatures dedicated to the event.

In the eleventh-century codex in Turin, only Basil and the widow are depicted within an illuminated initial

H.<sup>236</sup> In the eleventh-century codex Parisinus Coislin 239, two concise miniatures appear on facing folios.<sup>237</sup> In the first, the judge is shown gesturing toward a servant who stands in the middle of the composition and is about to strip Basil of his ecclesiastical garments. In the second, the judge is approached from the right by a group of angry citizens carrying cudgels. Only men in long robes are depicted. Finally, the eleventh-century codex 6 in the Monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mount Athos contains two miniatures which, although they have the same subject as those in codex Coislin 239, are quite different. In the first miniature, the judge is sitting in front of a building. Here Basil is in the center of the composition and behind him a servant is about to strip off his garments. A selection of torture instruments is depicted to the right of this composition (on the outer margin of the folio), referring to the threats of torture that the judge addressed to Basil in order to convince him to surrender the widow to his assessor.<sup>238</sup> This detail is

<sup>234</sup> H. Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale du VI<sup>e</sup> au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1929), 19–20, pl. XXI. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning* (n. 4 above), 139–40, fig. 17.

<sup>235</sup> PG 36:569AB.

<sup>236</sup> Univ. Lib. C. I. 6, fol. 89v. Galavaris, *Liturgical Homilies*, 128. Image published in L. Brubaker, "The Vita Icon of Saint Basil: Iconography," in *Four Icons in the Menil Collection*, ed. B. Davezac (Austin, 1992), 70–93, fig. 78.

<sup>237</sup> Fols. 104v, 105r, Galavaris, *Liturgical Homilies*, 129, figs. 227, 223.

<sup>238</sup> Fol. 140r, Galavaris, *Liturgical Homilies*, 129, fig. 160. Galavaris proposed that these torture instruments, including fire, a saw, and two

unique in the surviving corpus of Byzantine art. In the next miniature, the judge is seated in front of a building, in the middle of the composition, approached from both sides by groups of enraged citizens. This time the men are wearing short tunics (similar to the one worn by the judge's servant in the previous miniature) and are carrying torches, as well as cudgels with round weights full of nails at their extremities.<sup>239</sup> Again, this detailed depiction of weapons is unique in the surviving material and is inspired by Gregory's narration (where there is mention of torches, stones, and cudgels in the citizens' hands).<sup>240</sup> It should be noted that this codex preserves several other miniatures related to Basil's life that do not have iconographic parallels in other illustrated homilies.<sup>241</sup>

The heterogeneity of the above material suggests that in each manuscript the painter was probably creating anew the miniatures illustrating Basil's life, based on the text of the homily and not necessarily on a preexisting visual model. Any similarities between miniatures of different manuscripts can be explained by the fact that they illustrate the same text and make use of commonplace formulae (like the figure of the servant dressed in a short tunic, a type found throughout Byzantine art).<sup>242</sup>

hooks used to tear the flesh, were supposed to be painted next to the miniature depicting Basil's first trial (fol. 135r), because they are mentioned in the 49th paragraph of the homily, which is illustrated by this first trial. At that time the judge threatened to exile, torture, and kill Basil, who replied, "Fire and sword and wild beasts and tongues that tear the flesh are a source of delight to us rather than of terror." However, it should be noted that only the judge's threats are reported in paragraph 49 (and they are quite generic, with no reference to specific tortures, see PG 36:560BC), while Basil's reply is reported in paragraph 50 (PG 36:561A) which is not near the miniature of the first trial (judging by the photos available, it is probably on the following page, fol. 35v). On the other hand, the miniature of Basil's second trial (because of the protection he offered to the widow) appears right above a reference in paragraph 57, where the judge makes specific threats to have Basil beaten up and his flesh torn by hooks (PG 36:568C "Τύπτειν ἢ πείλει τὸν ἄσαρκον· ὁ δὲ ὑπέκυπτε. Ξέειν τοῖς ὀνυξίν. . ."). If the painter was also the scribe of the manuscript (or if the painter was reading the whole text between the spaces left by the scribe for illustration), he could have remembered Basil's words on torture (par. 50) when he came across the torture threats related to his second trial (par. 57), and decided to emphasize the saint's bravery by depicting the torture instruments next to the miniature of that second trial.

239 Fol. 140v, Galavaris, *Liturgical Homilies*, 129, fig. 161.

240 PG 36:569A.

241 Galavaris, *Liturgical Homilies*, 127–30.

242 This is exactly what Galavaris proposed (*ibid.*, 129, 183–84). On the contrary, Brubaker ("Vita Icon of Saint Basil" [n. 236 above], 81) hypothesized that because of their similarities the miniatures in cod. Coislin

Although the men with cudgels in the Paris *Sacra Parallela* miniature are similar to the enraged citizens depicted in other manuscripts, this is not enough to prove that our painter used an illustrated homiliary of Gregory Nazianzenus, from which he mistakenly copied the angry citizens outside the church (rather than the court), as if attacking Basil instead of the judge. The existence of such a model cannot be excluded, nor can it be conclusively proven. Even if our painter was influenced by such a model when depicting the men with cudgels outside the church, this does not prove that he made a copying mistake, wrongly combining two different episodes into one. He may have chosen to use the same iconographic element (men with cudgels) to transmit a different message: namely, to emphasize the danger Basil was facing in his effort to protect the widow and the church sanctuary. (The painter of the Panteleimon codex did exactly the same when he painted torture instruments next to his composition.) After all, men carrying cudgels can easily look alike, whether they are citizens defending a virtuous man or servants of a powerful man carrying out his orders.

Another miniature that deserves mention is the one illustrating Hezekiah's healing under the title "On blameless behavior, pleasing to God."<sup>243</sup> According to the story in Isaiah 38:1–5 excerpted in our florilegium, King Hezekiah prayed fervently to God for a postponement of death and asked him to consider his previous virtuous life. Appreciating this demonstration of piety, the Lord healed Hezekiah from his deadly illness and extended his life by fifteen years. In our manuscript, Hezekiah is first depicted lying on his sickbed, with a white bandage around his head and an expression of evident distress (Fig. 42). Isaiah, who was the intermediary between the king and the Lord, stands behind Hezekiah's bed. A staircase with sun rays falling upon it indicates the approaching healing of the king (since God's sign to him would be the descent and ascent of the shadow caused by the sun's movement, on ten steps of a staircase at the king's paternal house). Below this scene, Hezekiah is

239 and Panteleimonos 6 derive from a common model that has been lost. However, the two miniature cycles have more differences, and all their similarities can be explained by their common textual source and use of commonplace iconographic formulae.

243 Fol. 252r: ΠΕΡΙ ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑΣ ΑΝΕΠΙΛΗΠΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΑΡΕΚΤΟΥ. (This title is not included in the Vatican, but it is in the Rufucaldian recension, PG 96:460.) Hezekiah's healing is illustrated on fol. 252v.

shown healthy and standing in prayer, but now his hair is grey, as if to indicate that he has already lived many of the fifteen years the Lord promised him and is rendering thanks. In this way the artist emphasizes both the king's reward for his pious conduct (evident through his healing and long life) and his continuous and praiseworthy virtuousness (evident through his gratitude to God). There is no need to hypothesize a model for this visual comment of the painter on the passages he illustrated. Weitzmann, however, suggested that this praying figure was taken from an illustrated codex, where it would have been related to Hezekiah's thanksgiving ode to God, sung immediately after his healing (a text not included in our manuscript).<sup>244</sup> This ode must have been known to the painter, since it was one of the texts that by the ninth century made up part of Byzantine Psalter books—among the most widely circulating manuscripts in Byzantium.<sup>245</sup> However, this does not prove that the *Sacra Parallela* miniaturist copied the figure of the praying king from such an illustrated manuscript, where Hezekiah would have been depicted at the same age both when lying in his sickbed and when standing on his feet, praying to thank God for his healing, as is seen, for example in the tenth-century Paris Psalter (Fig. 44).<sup>246</sup>

The probable familiarity of the painter with this biblical story might also explain the depiction of the staircase and the sun rays in the first miniature, where Hezekiah's illness is illustrated. The reference to the staircase and sun is included not in the passage excerpted in the *Sacra Parallela* but in the part of the text which follows (Isaiah 38:7–8). Although this could indicate that our painter had seen a miniature of this subject in an illustrated codex (most probably a Psalter with Odes, rather than a Prophet Book),<sup>247</sup> it could equally be the case that the painter knew the story of Hezekiah's healing (made popular through his famous ode) and added the staircase and sun to emphasize the amazing miracles God was willing to perform for the

sake of a pious man. It is logical to assume that the readers of this codex would also have been familiar with the complete story of Hezekiah's healing and would therefore comprehend the meaning of this iconographic detail which is not accounted for in the compiled passage. It should be noted that the painter's depiction of the staircase is not comparable to any other known representation of Hezekiah's healing. In fact, a comparison between the *Sacra Parallela* miniature and the miniatures depicting the same event in the ninth-century codex Parisinus graecus 510 (Fig. 43) and the tenth-century codex Parisinus graecus 139 (Fig. 44) reveals striking differences: the position and pose of Isaiah and Hezekiah and the details of the bed and the footstool are very similar in the two imperial manuscripts and very different from the *Sacra Parallela* miniature; in the latter, Isaiah stands behind the king, Hezekiah brings his right rather than left hand close to his face, the bed is of a totally different type, the footstool is missing, and a bandage instead of a crown appears on the king's head.<sup>248</sup>

The striking differences in the architectural setting further distance our codex from the other two manuscripts. The only similarities between them are the diagonal positioning of the bed and the king's averting his head from Isaiah. However, the first element is a pictorial convention; for example, every time a bed or mattress is depicted in the *Sacra Parallela*, it is represented diagonally and with the same inclination from right to left.<sup>249</sup> The second element reflects a specific reference in the biblical text: Hezekiah is said to turn his head toward the wall (thus away from Isaiah) when praying to God. In other words, while the two imperial manuscripts employ the same iconography in the depiction of Hezekiah's illness,<sup>250</sup> the *Sacra Parallela* miniature clearly stands apart.<sup>251</sup>

244 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 148–49.

245 The ode is recorded in Isaiah 38:9–20. It is included, for example, in the 9th-century Chludov Psalter, fols. 157v–158v, where Hezekiah is shown praying while lying in his sickbed, Ščepkina, *Miniatjuri Khludovskoi Psaltiri* (n. 71 above).

246 Fol. 446v (Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs* [n. 234 above], plate XIV; Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning* [n. 4 above], fig. 161).

247 Compare what Lowden wrote in *Prophet Books* (n. 4 above), 80. Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 148) hypothesized that our painter copied this miniature from an illustrated Book of Prophets.

248 See fol. 435v of cod. Paris. gr. 510 and fol. 446v of cod. Paris. gr. 139 (Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs*, plates LVII, XIV; Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, figs. 43, 161).

249 See Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 17, 31, 34, 42, 44, 122, 149, 408, 409, 499, 559.

250 As noted by I. Kalavrezou in her paper on "The Paris Psalter," presented at the Eighth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference (Chicago, 1982), the painter of Paris. gr. 139 used Paris. gr. 510 as a source of iconographic motifs. Mentioned by Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 104 and 371, nn. 190 and 157 respectively.

251 By contrast, Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 371, mentioned the obliquely aligned bed, Hezekiah's averted head, and the depiction of steps as elements that relate the *Sacra Parallela* to the other two manuscripts.



**Fig. 42** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 252v, Hezekiah's illness; Hezekiah prays to God (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 43** Cod. Paris. gr. 510, fol. 435v, Hezekiah's illness (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 44** Cod. Paris. gr. 139, fol. 446v, Hezekiah's illness; Hezekiah's thanksgiving ode (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

Weitzmann claimed that the painter of our manuscript misunderstood his model and therefore depicted a staircase with more than ten steps, whereas he should have depicted a sundial of ten steps, according to Isaiah 38:8.<sup>252</sup> However, the Septuagint mentions, not a sundial, but a staircase at Hezekiah's paternal house. Moreover, it is said that the shadow will move up and down ten steps on this staircase, but this does not mean that the staircase itself had only ten steps.<sup>253</sup> Perhaps the artist chose to show a staircase of fifteen steps as an allusion to the fifteen years which Hezekiah would still enjoy under the sun according to God's promises,<sup>254</sup> although the choice of fifteen steps could equally well be just a coincidence. In any case, there is no evidence to suggest the misunderstanding of a model, or even to assert beyond doubt that the artist consulted a model. At the same time, it seems that, by depicting the aged Hezekiah thanking God, the painter elaborated on the text and demonstrated attention to meaningful details (like the grey hair of the praying king).

The material discussed up to now allows us to draw these two conclusions: very few miniatures of Parisinus 923 offer adequate evidence to support the hypothesis that the artist was inspired to create them on the basis of specific models, and none of these miniatures is an exact copy of surviving iconographic models; on the contrary, they seem to be adaptations and variations, made with attention to the content and context of the relevant florilegium passages.<sup>255</sup> So the healing of the man born blind includes an elaborate version of the "pool of Siloam" that probably reflects the painter's understanding of the term. The death of Job's children is caused by one and not four horn-blowing demons, because the relevant passage mentions only the devil and not the wind striking the

four corners of the house (as is the case in the illustrated manuscripts of this biblical book). Job's figure on the dung pile seems derived from such illustrated manuscripts, but the speaking gesture of his wife next to him is an addition which corresponds to the biblical text and is not found in illustrated books of Job. The stick-bearing figures outside St. Basil's church might have been inspired by an illustration of the citizens attacking the judge who mistreated their bishop, but in the *Sacra Parallela* they acquire a new role, as they appear to be servants of the judge and his assessor, attacking the saint who defends the sanctity of sanctuary. The staircase and the figure of Hezekiah praying might have been inspired by the illustration of his healing in a Psalter book, but they are characterized by meaningful details not found elsewhere (the fifteen steps as a probable allusion to the fifteen years of extra life granted to the king, and his grey hair that confirms his healing and God-sent longevity). In other words, there is evidence for creative and constructive use of models, not for uncritical or mistaken copying of models. More will be said on this matter in the last section of the present article. At this point, there remains one more issue that deserves examination in relation to the question of iconographic models: the influence of Jewish sources.

### Jewish Iconographic Sources?

In Weitzmann's opinion, iconographic peculiarities that are not accounted for by the relevant passages compiled in the *Sacra Parallela* florilegium can often be explained through the influence of Jewish iconographic sources, presumably developed on the basis of the Jewish textual tradition of the Old Testament, or in relation to other Jewish texts and legends. In some of the cases mentioned by Weitzmann, the Septuagint passages compiled in the *Sacra Parallela* offer full justification for the iconographic motifs in question, and therefore the hypothesis about Jewish influence is redundant. A characteristic example is the miniature that represents Cain cursed for his brother's murder, examined above.<sup>256</sup> Such cases will not be

252 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 148.

253 A staircase of two and five steps respectively appears in cod. Paris. gr. 510 and cod. Paris. gr. 139 (n. 248 above). In Isaiah 38:7–8 it is written: "Τούτο δέ σοι τὸ σημεῖον παρὰ κυρίου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ποιήσει τὸ ῥῆμα τούτου· τὴν σκιὰν τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν, οὓς κατέβη ὁ ἥλιος, τοὺς δέκα ἀναβαθμοὺς τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ πατρὸς σου, ἀποστρέψω τὸν ἥλιον τοὺς δέκα ἀναβαθμούς· καὶ ἀνέβη ὁ ἥλιος τοὺς δέκα ἀναβαθμούς, οὓς κατέβη ἡ σκιά." This probably means that since the sun was descending behind Hezekiah's paternal house, the shadow was extending its span down the staircase; so God would cause the sun to rise again, and consequently the shadow would ascend the staircase, before descending once more with the sunset.

254 Isaiah 38:5, included in the *Sacra Parallela* excerpt on fol. 252v.

255 Compare the similar observations regarding the illustration of Paris. 510 by Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 397–99 (mentioned in more detail below, pp. 189 and 197 n. 356).

256 See pp. 147–50, above. Another similar case appears on folio 368v, where Genesis 21:6–8 is illustrated with Sarah suckling Isaac while talking to a midwife. The Septuagint text fully justifies the theme of the miniature; however, Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 42, fig. 31) assumed



discussed here. There are, however, cases where Weitzmann's comments on the divergence between text and image in Parisinus 923 are well placed and his interpretations deserve full consideration. A few general observations on the influence of Jewish sources upon Christian art will provide a useful basis for this discussion.

The influence of Jewish art and literature on Christian iconography is a subject that has been hotly debated for decades among numerous scholars. Often, the tendency has been to emphasize the importance of one of the two possible sources of Jewish influence over the other: either to claim that Jewish elements found their way into Christian art predominantly through visual sources—in other words, through works of Jewish art, and especially illustrated manuscripts—or to claim that Jewish elements were incorporated in Christian art through textual and oral sources, i.e., the transmission of Jewish legends and exegesis through patristic works that show familiarity with Jewish sources or through apocryphal legends circulating in written or oral form among Christians. As an art historian dedicated to the re-creation of lost visual archetypes, Weitzmann subscribed to the first approach. However, the latest literature on this issue favors a more balanced and culturally contextualized point of view: “each picture cycle has its own historical, political, and cultural *Sitz im Leben* and represents a different aspect of Jewish-Christian relations,” which has to be studied with attention to its specificities and not according to preconceived theories.<sup>257</sup>

When subscribing to this methodological principle, one must confront a series of questions that Weitzmann did not consider when writing about the hypothetical Jewish models of the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures. For example, identifying a Jewish legend that can explain an iconographic peculiarity does not prove that the elements of that legend were transmitted into the illustration of Parisinus 923 visually rather than verbally (and usually we have no way of knowing which of the two happened). Secondly, texts that are loosely termed “Jewish legends” are often not as Jewish as we might think, in the sense that apocrypha and pseudepigrapha of Jewish origin were often ignored by the Jews themselves in

later times as soon as they became very popular among Christians.<sup>258</sup> Considering the public familiar with such legends, it would be perhaps more accurate to define them as Christian rather than Jewish; and in this case there is no reason to suppose that such legends had to be illustrated in order to influence the iconography of the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures—the painter's familiarity with them through textual sources or oral tradition would be sufficient. Thirdly, the existence of an iconographic element that recalls a reference found in a Jewish source and not in the Septuagint could sometimes be very well explained as a pictorial convention, used by the artist to illustrate his interpretation of the biblical text, without any knowledge of or intention to refer to the relevant Jewish legend. For example, when Christian artists depict Potiphar's wife attempting to seduce Joseph while sitting on a bed, it is not necessary to assume that they had in mind the Rabbinic legend according to which the woman pretended to be sick so as to stay home and await Joseph, while all the members of her household were attending an outdoor feast. It could be also assumed that the artists thought it appropriate to place a seduction scene in the bedroom and depict the seductress trying to lure her victim toward her bed.<sup>259</sup> Since in Genesis 39:12 the woman says to Joseph “Κοιμήθητι μετ' ἐμοῦ” (Sleep with me!), such a depiction can be considered a perfect sign of her intentions. In our *Sacra Parallela*, Potiphar's wife is again depicted sitting on a bed, this time showing her servants Joseph's clothes and accusing him of trying to seduce her. It seems that, in this case as well, the bedroom

<sup>258</sup> For a discussion of all the above in late antique and medieval art generally, see Kogman-Appel, “Jewish Tradition,” esp. 61–81. I thank Professor Nicholas de Lange for drawing my attention to this issue.

<sup>259</sup> For the rabbinic legend and the representations of this episode in Christian art, see *ibid.*, 66–70. The Vienna Genesis, where this episode is depicted, shows various iconographic elements that can be related to Jewish sources, even on p. 31, where the seduction attempt is illustrated. This does not necessarily prove, however, that the depiction of Potiphar's wife sitting on her bed while grabbing Joseph's cloak is derived from such a Jewish source, or that whenever this iconographic type appears it implies knowledge of the Jewish legend (which, after all, mentions the woman's feigned illness as an explanation for her being alone when Joseph arrived and not in order to indicate the exact setting where the seduction attempt took place). See H. Schreckenberg and K. Schubert, *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early and Medieval Christianity* (Assen–Maastricht, 1992), 213–35, for a summarized presentation of the influence of Jewish legends on the iconography of the Vienna Genesis, with reference to previous literature. The miniatures on p. 31 of the codex are discussed in pp. 225–27 of the monograph; the depiction of the seduction attempt in a bedroom is not related to the rabbinic legend mentioned above.

the influence of a Jewish legend, according to which Sarah was miraculously able to suckle all the children who came to the feast that Abraham gave for his son.

<sup>257</sup> For all the above see K. Kogman-Appel, “Bible Illustration and the Jewish Tradition,” in Williams, *Imaging* (n. 28 above), 61–96, with extensive references to previous literature.



**Fig. 45** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 274v, Phinehas transfixes Zimri and Cozbi (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

setting is used to indicate that the discussion is about seduction, and not that the woman was faking an illness. In this case, Weitzmann did not relate the scene to the above rabbinic legend, but I mention what others have said about the iconography of this biblical episode in order to give a characteristic example of iconographic elements that can be explained as pictorial conventions rather than the result of “Jewish influence.”<sup>260</sup>

In the following pages, however, I shall discuss some *Sacra Parallela* miniatures for which Weitzmann assumed a Jewish source. My aim is to investigate whether pictorial conventions and the painter’s interpretation of the relevant biblical passages can offer logical and adequate justification for the so-called Jewish elements.

On folio 274v, Phinehas is represented in military attire and on horseback while transfixing with his spear the idolatrous couple Zimri and Cozbi (Fig. 45).<sup>261</sup> This miniature illustrates Numbers 25:7–13, compiled under the title “On prophets who committed murder and pleased God.”<sup>262</sup> Weitzmann justifiably wondered why Phinehas is depicted in armor and on a galloping horse, which the text does not mention; he observed that in the ninth-century marginal Psalters he is represented on foot, while in the eleventh-century marginal Psalters he is shown on horseback as in the *Sacra Parallela*,

which means that this is not a peculiarity of Parisinus 923. Weitzmann concluded: “According to the Jewish legends, ‘Phinehas determined to risk his life in trying to kill the sinners. “For,” said he to himself, “the horse goes willingly into battle, and is ready to be slain only to be of service to its master. How much more does it behoove me to expose myself to death in order to sanctify God’s name.”’ Thus the horse becomes symbolic for risking one’s life, and the illustrator, if we are not mistaken, combined here horse and rider in a metaphorical way.”<sup>263</sup>

This is indeed a very interesting interpretation, and it cannot be excluded that the legend recounted here was in the painter’s mind, especially if such a legend was current in Christian culture. However, a simpler explanation could be proposed on the basis of a pictorial convention common not only in Byzantine art but in the *Sacra Parallela* manuscript itself: this is the iconographic type of the victorious rider who defeats his enemy by transfixing him with his spear. In the *Sacra Parallela*, for example, this iconography is used for Saul victorious over an Amalekite soldier, although in the relevant biblical passage there is no suggestion that the king was riding during battle.<sup>264</sup> In Christian art the holy rider is an emblematic figure of victory over evil;<sup>265</sup> and in Christian literature, the confrontation of Phinehas with the idolatrous couple is

<sup>260</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 46, fig. 44. The miniature appears on fol. 377r, where Genesis 39:14–15 is compiled under the title ΠΕΡΙ ΨΕΥΔΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΚΟΦΑΝΤΙΑΣ (“On falsehood and slander,” identical in PG 96:432B).

<sup>261</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 78.

<sup>262</sup> Fol. 274v: ΠΕΡΙ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΩΝ ΑΝΔΡΟΦΩΝΗCΑΝΤΩΝ [sic] ΚΑΙ ΕΥΑΡΕCΤΗCΑΝΤΩΝ ΘΕΩ. (Correctly spelled in PG 96:237A–C.)

<sup>263</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 60–61. Weitzmann did not specify whether the *Sacra Parallela* painter’s familiarity with the Jewish legend mentioned above would have come from a visual or a textual source.

<sup>264</sup> 1 Kings 15:6–7, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 75, fig. 111.

<sup>265</sup> See C. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (Aldershot–Burlington, 2003), 35–38, with references to previous literature.

frequently used in an equally emblematic way, symbolizing the confrontation between virtue and sin,<sup>266</sup> which in Byzantine culture was regularly described as a spiritual war, with vocabulary taken from the field of battle.<sup>267</sup> It is probably because Phinehas was so frequently used as a paradigmatic vanquisher of evil, to whom defenders of orthodoxy were often compared in iconophile literature,<sup>268</sup> that this figure appears dressed in armor (and not in the clothes of a Jewish high priest) in the ninth-century marginal psalters, known for their iconophile

**266** For example, Gregory of Nyssa uses Phinehas as a figure emblematic of the uprooting of carnal passions, *De vita Moysis*, ed. J. Daniélou, *Grégoire de Nyssa: La vie de Moïse ou traité de la perfection en matière de vertu* (Paris, 1955), 127–28; or as a symbol of the uprooting of sin through the spear of baptism, *In diem luminum*, in *Sermones*, ed. G. Heil et al. (Leiden, 1967), 240:2–6. In his fight against heresy, Cyril of Alexandria is compared to Phinehas, in the Acts of the Third Ecumenical Council, G. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, 4:1464BC. Justinian II is said to have surpassed Phinehas, in the Acts of the Quinisext Council, Mansi 9:933A, ed. and trans. G. Nedungatt and M. Featherstone, *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, *Κανονικά 6* (Rome, 1995), 50.18–20. Michael III is also said to be superior to Phinehas for summoning the antiheretic council of 867, by Patriarch Photios: *Homilies*, ed. B. Laourdas, *Φωτίου ὁμιλίαι* (Thessalonike, 1959), 179:6–10 (homily 18); trans. C. Mango, *The Homilies of Photius Patriarch of Constantinople* (Cambridge, MA, 1958), 313–14; also mentioned by Corrigan, *Visual Polemics* (n. 47 above), 36, n. 53.

**267** See, for example, the comments by C. Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (London, 1980), 159. Ephesians 6:10–17 was a very influential biblical passage in the perception of the confrontation between virtue and sin as a spiritual battle. For some texts that illustrate this perception see Acts of the Third Ecumenical Council, Mansi 4:1041A/E, 1047CD, 1285B/D; Acts of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, Mansi 9:629E, 668BC, 684D, 720E; Anastasios of Sinai, *Ὁδηγός* 10.5.38, 10.5.65–66, 14.1.70–71, ed. K.-H. Uthemann, *Anastasioi Sinaitae Viae Dux* (Leuven, 1981), 195, 198, 259; Patriarch Photios, *Επιστολαί*, 284.1034–1036 & 1379, 285.86–90, ed. B. Laourdas and L. Westerink, *Photii patriarchae constantinopolitani Epistulae et Amphilocheia* (Leipzig, 1985), 3:32, 43, 101. In most of the above excerpts the spiritual battle described is fought against heretics.

**268** *Vita Tarasii*, 17.10, 58.5–8, ed. and trans. S. Efthymiadis, *The Life of the Patriarch Tarasios by Ignatios the Deacon* (Aldershot, 1998), 91, 150. *Vita Nicephori*, PG 100:72AB, 149D. *Ex Naucrati confessoris encyclica, de obitu S. Theodori Studitae*, PG 99:97D. *Vita Nicolai Studitae*, PG 105:920C. In the following texts, the battle of iconophiles against iconoclasts in general is compared to the confrontation between Phinehas and the iniquitous couple: Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, Mansi 13:205E, also mentioned by Corrigan, *Visual Polemics* (n. 47 above), 36. In the same council, it is said that the iconoclasts will be pierced and defeated by the “spear of the spirit” (Mansi 13:277A); the weapon is called *σειρομάστις* like Phinehas’s spear in Numbers 25:8 (and as in the passage in Mansi 13.205E, where Phinehas is specifically mentioned). See also Patriarch Nikephoros, *Refutatio et eversio*, 36.78–84, ed. J. M. Featherstone, *Nicephori patriarchae constantinopolitani refutatio et eversio definitionis synodalis anni 815* (Leuven, 1997), 81.

overtones.<sup>269</sup> Transfixing with his spear the idolatrous couple emerging from a hole in the ground, like a hideous serpent, venomous like heresies,<sup>270</sup> Phinehas might allude here to the triumphant advocates of orthodoxy. The same interpretation could be applied to the depiction of Phinehas in the eleventh-century marginal psalters, where the emphasis on the battle between good and evil is further emphasized by the appearance of Phinehas as a victorious rider, and by the depiction of the idolatrous couple in the form of a hideous monster coming out of a cave.<sup>271</sup> Although the illustration of the *Sacra Parallela* does not share the polemical overtones of the marginal psalters, it has a marked interest in moral edification, in accordance with the character of the florilegium text

**269** Chludov Psalter, fol. 109v; Paris Marginal Psalter (cod. Paris. gr. 20), fol. 17v. See Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, figs. 46, 49. Also in the Pantokrator Psalter (cod. 61, Pantokrator Monastery, Mount Athos), fol. 153v; see *Οἱ Θεσσαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους: Εἰκονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα*, ed. S. Pelekanidou et al. (Athens, 1979), 3; fig. 228. In contrast, in the illustrated Byzantine Octateuchs the episode of Phinehas killing the idolatrous couple follows closely the Septuagint narrative, so he is depicted as a priest (since he was a grandson of Aaron, Numbers 25:7, 13), spearing the unfortunate lovers while they are in bed (Numbers 25:7–8). See Weitzmann and Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs* (n. 154 above), 210, figs. 1013a–1017a.

**270** Heresies are regularly described as venomous serpents in early Christian and Byzantine texts. The most characteristic text in this respect is the discourse of Epiphanius of Salamis against heresies, which the author entitled *Πανάριον*, meaning a medical box containing antidotes against heresies (PG 41:157CD, 177C, 201C, 360A; PG 42:833A), almost all of which are compared to venomous serpents: PG 41:268D, 296A, 405B, 449D–452A, 473A, 485CD, 544A–C, 545A, 548C, 553D, 625CD, 632D, 640D–641A, 653C, 657A, 677AB, 689D–692A, 817B, 888CD, 889C, 892A, 988D–989A, 1037C, 1061C, 1065B, 1068D, 1185C, 1197C–1200A; PG 42:28CD, 172C, 177AB, 201C, 213A, 320A, 545B, 705C, 740B, 756A, 820C (its length notwithstanding, this list is not exhaustive).

**271** The monster has taken the place of the couple in the Theodore Psalter, fol. 144r. In the Barberini Psalter, fol. 183v, the couple is depicted in the cave instead of the monster, but the reference to wild animals as symbols of adverse forces and sin that must be vanquished by the virtuous rider is still strong, owing to the cavernous setting. Bernabò, “L’illustrazione del Salmo 105” (n. 12 above), 99–100, also proposed that the figure of Phinehas in armor, fighting on foot or on horseback, is inspired by the iconography of military saints and is emblematic of the fight against evil. He suggested that the cave which appears in the relevant miniatures of the Theodore and Barberini Psalters represents Hades, where Phinehas wants to confine his adversaries. For descriptions of the miniatures see S. Der Nersessian, *L’Illustration des Psautiers Grecs du Moyen Age: Londres, Add. 19.352, Bibliothèque des Cahiers archéologiques 5* (Paris, 1970), 50, fig. 231; J. Anderson, P. Canart, and C. Walter, *The Barberini Psalter: Codex Vaticanus Barberinianus Graecus 372* (Zurich–New York, 1989), 127. For a more detailed analysis of all the issues mentioned here, see M. Evangelatou, “The Illustration of the Ninth-Century Marginal Psalters: Layers of Meaning and Their Sources” (Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 2002), 98–102.

itself. It is equally likely, therefore, that the *Sacra Parallela* image of Phinehas on horseback alludes to the Byzantine perception of this biblical figure as emblematic of the virtuous punisher and vanquisher of evil. It cannot be excluded that the *Sacra Parallela* painter copied this image from a marginal Psalter, as Bernabò has proposed, although the first surviving Psalters to depict Phinehas on horseback rather than on foot postdate Parisinus 923 by two centuries.<sup>272</sup> On the other hand, it is also possible that the *Sacra Parallela* and the Psalter images of Phinehas as rider are independent creations reflecting the idea of the holy warrior and vanquisher of evil.<sup>273</sup> Another plausible hypothesis is that the representation of Phinehas as warrior was inspired by the events narrated in Numbers 31, where this priest appears as a leading figure in the military campaign of the Israelites against the Midianites. Cozbi, the woman Phinehas killed together with her Israelite lover Zimri (Numbers 25) before the beginning of the war, was a Midianite. In the Old Testament, both the killing of the couple and the campaign against the Midianites are described as justified punishment against the iniquity of idolatry. It is significant that the *Sacra Parallela* painter chose a symbolic and interpretative illustration of Numbers 25:7–13 rather than a literal one, in order to emphasize the intensity of conflict between good and evil and the triumph of the former over the latter. Whether he copied this iconography from another codex or not, the importance of his choice still remains and provides an additional example of the liberties he took in the illustration of Parisinus 923. The miniatures discussed below present similar features.

Facing Phinehas, on folio 275r of the *Sacra Parallela*, two more scenes illustrate passages compiled under the same title, “On prophets who committed murder and pleased God.” First, the defeated Amalekite king Agag is brought before Samuel and is afterwards executed by a young man (Fig. 46). Then, three youthful Israelites are shown slaying the prophets of Baal at Elijah’s order

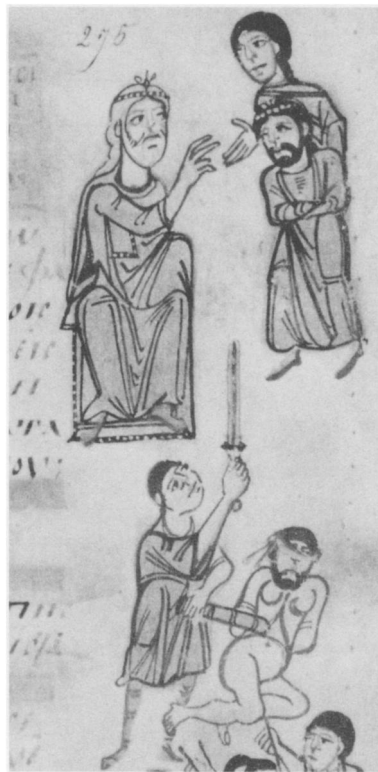


Fig. 46 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 275r, Samuel orders Agag’s execution (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

(Fig. 47).<sup>274</sup> Weitzmann claimed that neither composition corresponded exactly to the relevant Septuagint passages, where it is said that the prophets themselves killed Agag and Baal’s servants. Commenting on the first scene, he wrote, “This deviation can be explained neither as carelessness on the part of the illustrator, nor as a mere pictorial convention,” and argued that it happened through the copying of a miniature illustrating the same event in the *Antiquitates Judaicae* by Josephus Flavius, where Samuel is said to have ordered Agag put to death instead of killing him with his own hands.<sup>275</sup> Commenting on the second scene, Weitzmann wrote, “The deviation may be interpreted as a slip on the part of the illustrator, who perhaps did not read far enough ahead to pick up this detail. Yet there is another and more probable explanation. The killing by the Israelites is thoroughly in accordance with the text of the

272 Bernabò, “L’illustrazione del Salmo 105,” 109. Bernabò implied that, since the 11th-century Barberini and Theodore Psalters were based on an earlier codex similar to the 9th-century Chludov Psalter, that codex might have included an image of Phinehas on horseback (in the Chludov he appears on foot) and this archetype could have inspired the *Sacra Parallela* miniature.

273 The hypothesis that the 11th-century Psalters copied the iconography of Phinehas on horseback from the *Sacra Parallela* is rather unlikely (given the uniqueness of this codex and the fact that it does not share other common elements with the marginal Psalters), as noted by Bernabò, “L’illustrazione del Salmo 105,” 109.

274 1 Kings 15:32–33, 3 Kings 18:40 (PG 96:237C).

275 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 76–77.



Fig. 47 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 275r, Elijah orders the execution of the prophets of Baal. (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

*Antiquitates Judaicae* of Josephus Flavius, which explicitly states that ‘they [the Israelites] seized their prophets and killed them at Elijah’s behest.’<sup>276</sup> The scholar concludes again that the artist is in this case influenced by a miniature from an illustrated *Antiquitates*, rather than from a Book of Kings.

Inconsistencies can be noted in these two interpretations. First, in the case of Agag’s execution, Weitzmann is certain that the painter used an illustrated *Antiquitates* as a model, but in the case of the execution of Baal’s prophets he suggests that the painter might have read the text inattentively and thus produced a miniature that does not correspond to the exact words of the Septuagint. Second, it seems a bit incongruous to suppose that the *Sacra Parallela* painter would use as his model an illustrated codex containing the four Books of Kings for almost all the miniatures related to passages from that biblical source—according to Weitzmann’s own assumption<sup>277</sup>—but would resort to an illustrated *Antiquitates*

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., 75–103. His re-creation of this illustrated Book of Kings is totally hypothetical, since the miniatures discussed are perfectly explainable as illustrations of the adjacent texts, often through the use of common iconographic formulae for speaking, praying, or fighting figures.

(of which no Byzantine example survives) just for the two miniatures in question.<sup>278</sup> Third, it is possible that, in these two cases, the painter produced miniatures which reflected his understanding of the Septuagint texts, which state, “Samuel said; bring me Agag, the king of the Amalekites . . . and Samuel killed Agag” and “Elijah said to the people; arrest Baal’s prophets, none of them should be saved; and they arrested them, and Elijah led them to the river Kisson and killed them there.” The painter might have assumed in each case that the defeated men were killed not by the hand of the prophet himself but by the Israelites following the order of the prophet. In both cases the prophets would be equally responsible for the death of those men, and their decisions would be pleasing to God (according to the relevant florilegium title). It is worthy of notice that in the first miniature the executioner looks up, toward the prophet whose order he follows (Fig. 46), and in the second miniature the men about to be executed turn their gaze toward the prophet who decided their fate (Fig. 47). In this way the miniaturist emphasized that the prophets were personally responsible for the executions.<sup>279</sup> It is possible that both the *Sacra Parallela* painter and Josephus Flavius rationalized independently on the biblical narrative and preferred not to present the prophets themselves as the executioners.<sup>280</sup> In contrast, the Septuagint narrative leaves no margin for such an interpretation in the case of Phinehas, who does not order somebody else to surrender to him the iniquitous Zimri and Cozbi, but clearly goes after them and kills them with his own hands. Later on he is a leading figure in the war against Cozbi’s tribe, when all the

<sup>278</sup> The *Sacra Parallela* of Paris provides no substantial evidence for the existence of such an illustrated book. Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 246) hypothesized that the miniature illustrating one passage from the *Antiquitates* in cod. Paris. gr. 923 derives from such an illustrated model, but there is no reason to suppose that the painter could not have produced this miniature based on the content of the relevant passage alone. The illustrated manuscripts of works by Josephus that were made in medieval Western Europe date from the 9th century onward and cannot substantiate any hypothesis about earlier illustrated sources, whereas no comparable material survives from Byzantium. See Schreckenberg and Schubert, *Jewish Historiography and Iconography* (n. 259 above), 87–130.

<sup>279</sup> For close-ups of the miniatures, see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 115, 161.

<sup>280</sup> It cannot be excluded that the painter was familiar with the text of the *Antiquitates*. The works of Josephus, which were very popular among Christians, were almost completely ignored by the Jews, so in this sense the hypothetical influence of Josephus on the iconography of the *Sacra Parallela* should not be examined in a section entitled “Jewish Sources.” See Schreckenberg and Schubert, *Jewish Historiography and Iconography*, 51–85, 87, 129–30.



Midianite men are slaughtered. Since up to now the evidence discussed suggests that the miniaturist of Parisinus 923 paid great attention to the content of the passages he illustrated, it seems more reasonable to assume that in the two cases mentioned here (as well as in the case of Phinehas on the facing folio) he chose a slightly different interpretation of the text, rather than to hypothesize that he simply copied the miniatures from a different source without noticing that they contradicted the Septuagint passages. Even the supposition that in the case of the two miniatures representing the prophets the painter was not as careful as usual in following the text he was illustrating seems more reasonable than to assume that he depended on a model as hypothetical as an illustrated *Antiquitates* codex.

Another case worth considering comes from folio 377v of the *Sacra Parallela*, where three men are represented stoning and killing Naboth, who was falsely accused by two perjurers, so that after his death king Ahab could appropriate his vineyard. This passage from 3 Kings 20:12–13 is compiled under the florilegium title “On falsehood and slander.”<sup>281</sup> Weitzmann observed that the text mentions two false witnesses, not three, so when the painter depicted three men instead of two stoning Naboth he must have used a source other than an illustrated Book of Kings. According to Weitzmann, this source must once again have been an illustrated codex of the *Antiquitates* by Josephus Flavius, who mentions three false witnesses slandering Naboth.<sup>282</sup> An obvious reply is that the Septuagint text mentions two false witnesses but does not specify that only they stoned Naboth. It rather implies that all the people of the city, who brought Naboth to the judges, took him outside the walls and killed him. So our artist need not have seen an illustrated Jewish source in order to paint three rather than two figures stoning the unfortunate man.

In contrast to the above, the following case presents a divergence of text and image that is indeed difficult to explain. On folio 371v, the story of the Levite and his concubine (Judges 19:25–28) is illustrated with three miniatures: first the man gives away the woman, then the concubine crouches alive at the doorstep while the Levite speaks to her, and finally the concubine rides a donkey with the man leading the way (Fig. 48). According to the text, she should be represented dead in the



Fig. 48 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 371v, the story of the Levite's concubine (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

281 See n. 260, above, for the Greek text of the title.

282 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 90, fig. 164.

last two miniatures after her abuse by the Benjamites. Weitzmann explained the discrepancy by suggesting that the model of these miniatures derived not from an illustrated codex of the Septuagint but from an illustrated codex of the Hebrew text of Judges, where indeed the woman is not described as dead (although this becomes evident in the following lines of the text, where the Levite sends pieces of her body to the twelve tribes of Israel).<sup>283</sup> Weitzmann did not explain why the painter would have used such a model for only one passage of the Book of Judges, while (according to the scholar's own analysis) he used an illustrated text of the Septuagint for all the other miniatures in the Book of Judges.<sup>284</sup> It is also reasonable to wonder whether the hypothetical Jewish model would have indeed represented the woman alive, since the dismemberment of her corpse (not included in the *Sacra Parallela* passage) is mentioned right after the Levite is said to place her on the ass and travel back home (Judges 19:29). With the exception of Parisinus 923, in all other surviving Byzantine representations of this story the woman is depicted dead on the threshold of the house and on the ass (in the latter case tied on the back of the animal together with the mattress on which she lies).<sup>285</sup> Perhaps it is more plausible to hypothesize that our painter did not have a model and did not notice the short phrase ΟΤΙ ΗΝ ΝΕΚΡΑ ("because she was dead") which appears almost at the bottom of the first column of text, after the description of how the concubine fell at

the threshold of the house where the Levite found her and asked her to rise and follow him on his way back home. Immediately after this phrase, the man is said to place the woman on the ass and continue his journey. Just by missing three words, the painter could have remained unaware of the fact that the woman was dead on the ass, so he painted her riding side-saddle, with a sad expression on her face, which reflects her distress after the abuse to which she was submitted the previous night.<sup>286</sup>

Admittedly, this lack of attention to the content of the illustrated passage (and apparent lack of familiarity with this biblical story) contrasts sharply with the painter's usual attentiveness, but it is perhaps reasonable to think that no matter how diligent and attentive this painter was, he was not infallible and could occasionally work at a lower level of concentration and efficiency than usual. It cannot be excluded that in this case he chose a shortcut and, instead of inventing a solution for the depiction of a corpse on an animal, he used the familiar motif of a figure riding. In fact, a similar case of simplification appears in codex 14 of the Esphigmenou Monastery on Mount Athos, a collection of homilies dated to the eleventh or twelfth century.<sup>287</sup> The story of the Levite and his concubine is illustrated with thirteen miniatures,<sup>288</sup> one of which shows the woman dead on the threshold of the house.<sup>289</sup> However, in the next miniature the Levite travels back home without her (nobody is represented on the back of the donkey that he pulls behind him), even though in the next scene, at the lower register of the same miniature, he appears dismembering the body of his concubine, indicating that he obviously took it with him on his return trip.<sup>290</sup> In other words, it might be suggested that in this case too the painter was not familiar with the iconographic solution employed in the

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., 70–71 (see figs. 103–5 for close-ups of the miniatures).

<sup>284</sup> Ibid., 65–70.

<sup>285</sup> In the Octateuchs only the scene with the corpse tied on the ass is represented. See Weitzmann and Bernabò, *The Byzantine Octateuchs* (n. 154 above), 296, figs. 1536–39. According to Lowden (*Octateuchs* [n. 4 above], 121) the prototype of the Byzantine illustrated Octateuchs which are known to us today was created in the 11th century. It is possible that the iconography of the concubine's corpse tied on the ass was invented specifically for that manuscript and therefore was unknown in the 9th century, when Paris. gr. 923 was illustrated. Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 71) made reference to the 11th-century codex Taphou 14 and the 12th-century codex Esphigmenou 14: each of these includes a homily on the Nativity of Christ in which the story of the concubine is mentioned and extensively illustrated. (The text of the homily is published in PG 96:1435–49 under the name of John of Damascus, but many scholars ascribe it to John of Euboea; see Galavaris, *Liturgical Homilies* [n. 233 above], 223. The homily has been published in the complete edition of the works of John of Damascus by B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 5, *Opera homiletica et hagiographica* [Berlin, 1988], 302–47.) According to Weitzmann, both the episodes—the woman dead on the threshold and then her corpse tied on the ass—are represented. In fact, in the Esphigmenou codex her corpse does not appear on the ass (see below).

<sup>286</sup> This passage is compiled under the title "On grave and impious acts," the effect of which is clearly mirrored on the woman's face. (ΠΕΡΙ ΧΑΛΕΠΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΟCΙΩΝ ΠΡΑΞΕΩΝ, fol. 371r. In PG 96:425B, the title is obviously misspelled: "Περὶ χαλεπῶν καὶ ἀνοσίῳν πράξεων.") In Fig. 48, I have highlighted the word ΝΕΚΡΑ.

<sup>287</sup> Weitzmann (*Sacra Parallela*, 71) dated the codex in the 12th century. An 11th-century dating is proposed in the publication of the codex in Pelekanidou et al., *Θησαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους* (n. 269 above), 2:366. For the homily in this manuscript in which the story of the concubine is narrated see above, n. 285.

<sup>288</sup> Many of these include two registers, hence the episodes represented are actually more numerous. See *Θησαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους*, 2:387–89, figs. 395–407.

<sup>289</sup> Fol. 415v. Ibid., 388, fig. 402.

<sup>290</sup> Fol. 416r. Ibid., 388, fig. 403.

Octateuchs (where the woman's corpse is tied onto the back of the donkey), and he chose to facilitate his task by adopting a simpler (and less accurate) solution.<sup>291</sup> The *Sacra Parallela* painter might have done the same, but instead of omitting the woman from the journey scene, he chose to represent her alive so that her expression of distress would emphasize the reference of the relevant florilegium title to "grave and impious acts." If we supposed that the painter had copied the miniature from a model which showed the woman alive, we would still have to admit an uncharacteristic lack of attention on his part, since he would have chosen an iconography that did not correspond to the passage he was illustrating. In all the other cases where the artist did not illustrate the text literally (as when he depicted Phinehas riding in armor, or he showed the prophets ordering but not performing themselves the executions of their enemies), his choices can be attributed not to a lack of attention but to an interpretative approach to his subject. The story of the Levite's concubine is the only case of which I am aware that cannot be explained in a similar way; in my opinion it demonstrates that even the most diligent illustrators can occasionally make mistakes or allow themselves to choose easier and less accurate solutions.

The door in the second scene of this story, which is very similar to doors that appear in other miniatures of the manuscript, is a feature that speaks against the use of the model proposed by Weitzmann. For example, the same doors appear in the two miniatures on folios 299v–300r, with the man seeking asylum in a church and Basil protecting the widow (Figs. 39–40). As already shown, these two miniatures are unrelated to each other and each one illustrates a different passage, from an Old Testament book and a patristic homily respectively.<sup>292</sup> Consequently, their similarities could not have resulted from a common

model but must have resulted from the fact that the same artist produced both miniatures, making use of standard forms for the depiction of buildings—as he also does for the depiction of certain pieces of furniture or types of figures, as Annemarie Weyl Carr has observed.<sup>293</sup>

This observation is relevant to the last case of "Jewish influence" I will discuss, a case presented not by Weitzmann but by Elisabeth Revel-Neher, following in his footsteps. Accepting Weitzmann's hypothesis concerning the extensive dependence of the *Sacra Parallela* painter on many richly illustrated manuscripts that he supposedly used as models and his hypothesis about the influence of Jewish sources,<sup>294</sup> Revel-Neher identified one more iconographic element that in her opinion resulted from the influence of such a hypothetical source: the representation of the Ark of the Covenant of the Old Testament in Parisinus 923 does not correspond with either of the two Byzantine iconographic types known from the Octateuchs and other manuscripts (that is, a chest with either a rounded or a pointed lid).<sup>295</sup> On the contrary, the *Sacra Parallela* painter depicted the Ark as a structure with a double door on its front and a gabled roof on top (Figs. 49–51).<sup>296</sup> According to Revel-Neher, this iconography was inspired by the Torah Shrine, in other words, the bookcase-closet in which the Torah scrolls were kept in late antique synagogues. This sacred container was considered analogous to the Ark holding the Ten Commandments. Depictions of the Torah Shrine with a double (two-leaf) door and a gabled upper part survive on various media from the late antique period, such as decorative reliefs, painted glass, and mosaics

291 By contrast, the relevant miniature in codex Taphou 14 follows the iconographic solution seen in the Octateuchs (the concubine's body tied on the ass). A comparison of the two miniature cycles dedicated to this biblical story in the Esphigmenou and Taphou codices clearly indicates that they were created independently of each other. (Compare the Esphigmenou miniatures, *Θησαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους*, 2:387–89, figs. 395–407 with the miniatures of Taphou published by M. Meyer, "The Levite's Concubine: Imaging the Marginal Woman in Byzantine Society," *Studies in Iconography* 27 [2006], 45–76, figs. 1–7. At *ibid.*, figs. 8–12, the Esphigmenou miniatures are also reproduced.)

292 Mentioned at pp. 162–66, above. Similar concentric circles and squares appear, for example, on the doors depicted in the miniature with Susanna and the Elders (illustrating the Book of Daniel) and a creditor visiting a debtor (illustrating a homily by Basil the Great), fols. 373v, 142v, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 393, 563. According to Oretskaia,

"Stylistic Tendency" (n. 12 above), 13, a similar type of door illustrated with concentric circles is found in the wall paintings of Fortuna Virilis in Rome (in the city where Oretskaia proposes that cod. Paris. gr. 923 was produced).

293 Carr, review of *Sacra Parallela* (n. 29 above), 149.

294 Revel-Neher, "Problèmes iconographiques dans les *Sacra Parallela*" (n. 30 above), 7, 12.

295 *Ibid.*, 9–10.

296 *Ibid.*, 7–9, figs. 1–3. The *Sacra Parallela* miniatures are as follows. Fig. 49: a structure behind Bezaleel which Weitzmann identified with the Ark, but which could instead represent the Tabernacle (Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 55–56, fig. 63, fol. 335r, next to Exodus 31:1–4, 6, which introduces Bezaleel as accomplished in all crafts). This structure is slightly different from the other two, which certainly represent the Ark, in that the roof is melon shaped and not pointed, and door-leaves are clearly represented, while in the other two structures only arched doorways appear. Figs. 50–51: The Ark carried to Jerusalem according to 2 Kings 6:6–7 and 6:12–15, 17–19 (Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 82–83, figs. 129–30, folios 213r, 369r).



**Fig. 49** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 335r, Bezaleel and the ark or the Tabernacle (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 50** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 213r, Uzzah touches the Ark (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 51** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 369r, David before the Ark (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

(Fig. 52).<sup>297</sup> Revel-Neher hypothesized that the *Sacra Parallela* painter saw a Torah Shrine in an illustrated Jewish manuscript, although she admitted that no such codex survives from that period or earlier.<sup>298</sup> If the miniaturist did indeed have in mind a bookcase when painting the Ark, he could have based his creation on representations of such objects found in Christian art (compare, for example, the bookcase-closet with the four Gospels next to an anonymous martyr in the mosaic decoration of the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Fig. 53);<sup>299</sup> or he could

<sup>297</sup> Revel-Neher ("Problèmes iconographiques dans les *Sacra Parallela*," 10–11, figs. 4–5) mentioned the lintel relief at the synagogue of Capernaum, gilded glass roundels from Roman catacombs, and the mosaic pavement of the synagogue at Hammat-Tiberias. The Torah shrine reproduced here in Fig. 52 appears on a glass fragment now in the Israel Museum of Jerusalem, inv. no. IMJ 66.36.15, published by K. Katz, P. Kahane, and M. Broshi in *From the Beginning: Archaeology and Art in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem* (London, 1968), 129, fig. 103.

<sup>298</sup> Revel-Neher, "Problèmes iconographiques dans les *Sacra Parallela*," 12.

<sup>299</sup> Also mentioned in *ibid.*, 10. In the past scholars had identified the martyr of the mosaic as St. Lawrence, but later a convincing case

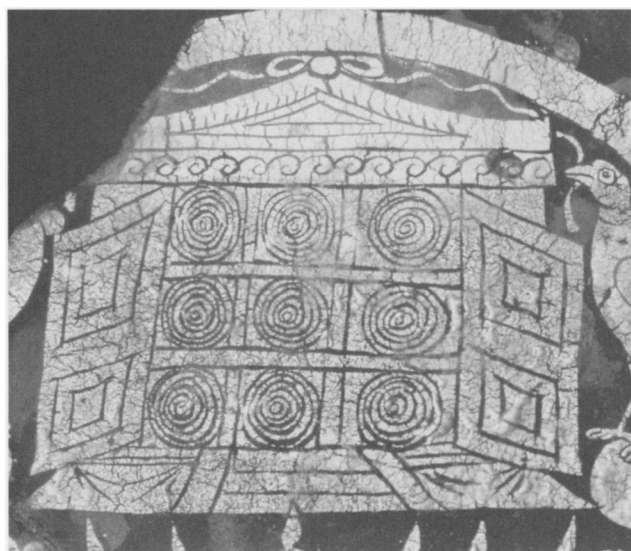


Fig. 52 Torah Shrine from late antique glass cup (photo courtesy of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem)

have copied such a piece of furniture from real life. The use of a Jewish iconographic source is not necessary in this respect. However, a conspicuous difference between the *Sacra Parallela* depictions of the Ark and the Torah Shrines or Gospel bookcases represented in art is that in the former there seem to be two arched doorways separated by a central column, while in the latter there is one double door with rectangular leaves. Furthermore, the *Sacra Parallela* structure used for the representation of the Ark has similarities with other structures which are employed throughout the codex in representations of religious or secular buildings (compare Figs. 50–51 with Figs. 54–55).<sup>300</sup> Therefore, it seems likely that the *Sacra Parallela* painter had no models available for the representation of the Ark and resorted to a generic solution which he also used in order to depict important architectural settings.

was made for St. Vincent. See G. Mackie, “New Light on the So-Called Saint Lawrence Panel at the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Ravenna,” *Gesta* 29 (1990): 54–60.

**300** For example, the second and third representations of the Ark (Figs. 50–51) are similar to the representations of the Temple of Jerusalem (Fig. 54) and the central section of the inn where the good Samaritan recovers (Fig. 55); the second representation of the Ark (Fig. 50) is similar to the representation of the secular building in the upper part of fol. 372r (Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 137); the upper part of the third representation of the Ark (Fig. 51) is similar to the representation of the roof of the secular building in the lower scene of Rahab’s story on fol. 79v (Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 79).



Fig. 53 Bookcase with four Gospels, detail from the mosaic with a martyr saint, Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Ravenna (photo courtesy Scala/Art Resource, NY)



Fig. 54 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 213v, King Uzziah enters the Temple (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



With the above examples in mind, I shall now turn to the last section of this paper, where I shall draw conclusions about the working methods of the *Sacra Parallela* miniaturist and the characteristics of his illustrations that will further illuminate the importance of the word-and-image relationship.

### The Method of Production of the *Sacra Parallela*

The material discussed so far calls into question Weitzmann's theory about the creation of Parisinus 923 through extensive (and often uncritical) copying of models. The evidence I have presented supports the existence of a close relationship between word and image in the pages of this singular codex, a relationship that certainly contravenes any theory of widespread copying. At this point, a brief and systematic review of Weitzmann's main arguments in support of his model theory will further clarify the situation. The specific cases mentioned in this review will shed more light on aspects of the creative process that led to the production of this unique codex.

One of Weitzmann's main arguments in support of his model theory regarding the *Sacra Parallela* rested upon his assumption that many miniatures were abbreviations of more elaborate models. He wrote: "The very character and composition of the majority of scenes are such that it is only too obvious that they have been adjusted to fit the narrow margin; models must therefore be presupposed in which these compositions unfolded much more freely."<sup>301</sup> This, however, is a hypothesis and not a proof: although many miniatures seem condensed and packed with numerous figures, this does not necessarily indicate that they are abbreviations of model miniatures. It simply demonstrates that, since the artist wanted to include a certain amount of information in his compositions, he often had to adjust them with more or less difficulty to the narrow margins of the pages.<sup>302</sup> So, as we have seen, he depicted only the main protagonists

in scenes illustrating Christ's healing miracles, and he adjusted the number of figures according to the content of the relevant passages; when the crowd also plays a protagonist role (in the healing of the woman with the issue of blood), it is depicted despite the limitations of the narrow margin. In other cases, what might seem an abbreviated version of a more detailed miniature is in fact a very careful iconographic choice, as when Basil appears as the tallest tower of his city walls, protecting his congregation against evil, or Peter appears next to a woman (either his wife or mother-in-law) as a reminder to viewers that he was married.

Another of Weitzmann's main arguments in support of his hypothesis that the *Sacra Parallela* painter was copying extensively illustrated codices relied on the fact that only passages of Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzenus, and John Chrysostom, among works from the Fathers, are illustrated with narrative miniatures (rather than author portraits alone), although in Weitzmann's opinion passages from other patristic authors also lend themselves to pictorialization. He thinks this indicates that only the works of those three Fathers were available to the miniaturist of our codex in illustrated form. In Weitzmann's view, the painter of the *Sacra Parallela* showed no "independence and inventiveness" in his work, and for this reason he relied exclusively on models.<sup>303</sup> However, the material already examined has clearly demonstrated that the work of the *Sacra Parallela* painter is characterized by the very qualities that Weitzmann denies are present. Many of his miniatures indicate that he worked independently from models, attentively illustrating passages that had sufficient narrative quality to inspire pictorialization. In this light, Weitzmann's observation on the narrative illustration of passages from only three patristic authors calls for a different explanation. One obvious answer is that passages from Basil the Great, Gregory Nazianzenus, and John Chrysostom are the lengthiest and most numerous among all the patristic quotations compiled in the *Sacra Parallela*. Consequently, their passages are bound to give more opportunities for the creation of narrative miniatures, while the excerpts from all the other authors are usually very short and mention only abstract concepts rather than stories proper for illustration. Besides, it is not altogether impossible that, in illuminating with narrative compositions excerpts only from these three Fathers, the painter (and perhaps

301 Ibid., 12.

302 Cf. Corrigan, *Visual Polemics* (n. 47 above), 106, who observed that in the 9th-century Chludov and Pantokrator Psalters the miniatures appear less crowded because the margins were designed to be very wide; the margins of the *Sacra Parallela* are much narrower.

303 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 13–14.

also the commissioner) of our codex made a conscious choice to honor them more than all the others, and to draw the attention of the reader particularly to their writings. This was also the intention of the compiler of the florilegium, who chose not only to quote principally from these three Fathers but also to place passages from their works before all the other patristic quotations, immediately after the epistles of the apostles (in the sequence of excerpts compiled under each title). Weitzmann's above argument cannot support the hypothesis that the painter of the *Sacra Parallela* used illustrated homiliaries of Basil, Gregory Nazianzenus, and John Chrysostom in order to copy miniatures illustrating their passages. Only a thorough examination of the miniatures themselves could yield some indications on the use of such models, but, as already discussed, the only instance in which we have grounds to assume that the painter might have used an iconographic model (which he thoroughly transformed in a new creation) is the image of St. Basil defending the widow from the judge's assessor. This evidence alone cannot prove the existence and copying of the extensively illustrated homiliaries hypothesized by Weitzmann.

In his monograph on the *Sacra Parallela*, Weitzmann often uses the argument of iconographic similarities to support his model theory, but, as already noted, in very few cases can conspicuous iconographic parallels actually substantiate the claim for the use of iconographic models. The generic similarities that Weitzmann identified between miniatures of the *Sacra Parallela* and those of other manuscripts can easily be explained on the basis of the common text that such miniatures illustrated, and the iconographic topoi that different artists used in their work. In fact, many of the miniatures discussed as iconographically similar are characterized by differences that suggest their independent creation. A good example is provided by the sequence of *Sacra Parallela* miniatures that illustrate the parable of the Good Samaritan. They have been considered similar in iconography to the miniatures of codex Parisinus graecus 510 (Figs. 55–56).<sup>304</sup> However, the depiction of Jerusalem at the beginning of the sequence and the representation of the priest and the Levite who abandon the wounded man in both manuscripts is justified by their common textual source (Luke 10:30–32). At the same time, in the *Sacra*

*Parallela* the sequence ends with an image of the inn where the wounded man recovered (Luke 10:34), while in codex Parisinus graecus 510 the composition ends with the image of Jericho, where the man was heading (Luke 10:30).<sup>305</sup> In this latter manuscript, the man is depicted twice as many times, and Christ is represented in the place of the Good Samaritan; in the *Sacra Parallela*, on the other hand, Christ instead appears before and after the sequence of miniatures illustrating the parable, talking to his audience according to Luke 10:25–29, 36–37.<sup>306</sup> In the *Sacra Parallela* the man is naked during and after the attack, while in Parisinus 510 he is wearing a loincloth. In the *Sacra Parallela* he is beaten by four thieves, two on each side, and he is seated frontally; in Parisinus 510 he is lying down while one thief strips off his clothes and two others beat him.<sup>307</sup> The fact that in both cases the unfortunate man is straddling an ass rather than riding sidesaddle can be considered an iconographic convention. The only striking iconographic analogy between the two manuscripts is the similar shape of the clubs used by the thieves,<sup>308</sup> but this can perhaps be explained as reflecting a widespread type of weapon used at the time. Likewise, the miniatures illustrating episodes from Samson's life in the two manuscripts have more differences than similarities—and the latter can be justified by their common textual source, or by iconographic conventions such as holding one's opponent by the hair and raising the weapon high to give the death blow.<sup>309</sup> A striking

305 According to Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 76, Jericho is depicted in both manuscripts, but whereas cod. Paris. gr. 510 shows a city inscribed ΙΕΡΙΧΩ, the *Sacra Parallela* shows only one building, where the innkeeper is ready to receive the travelers (Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 176).

306 Fols. 320v, 321r, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 457a (upper part) and 458.

307 Weitzmann (ibid., 176) identified four thieves in both manuscripts, whereas Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 77, identified three thieves in both manuscripts, but the images published in their monographs show four thieves in cod. Paris. gr. 923 and three thieves in cod. Paris. gr. 510. The head of the thief who is second from the right in the *Sacra Parallela* is rather damaged and, because the figures of all the thieves are rather small, he is not clearly visible today.

308 Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 77.

309 Brubaker (ibid., 180–82, figs. 35, 90–91) also admitted some differences, including the fact that Samson is bearded in the *Sacra Parallela* (fols. 108r–108v, 246r–247v) but not in the cod. Paris. gr. 510 (fol. 347v). See also Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 69–70, figs. 93–102. See also the discussion of Hezekiah's healing, pp. 166–69 above, where again Parisinus 923 and Parisinus 510 have more differences than similarities (and the latter can be fully explained through iconographic conventions and common textual sources).

304 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fols. 320v–321r, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 175–76, figs. 457–58; cod. Paris. gr. 510, fol. 143v, Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning* (n. 4 above), 76–77, fig. 19.



Fig. 55 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 320v, Christ teaches and the parable of the Good Samaritan (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



Fig. 56 Cod. Paris. gr. 510, fol. 143v, the parable of the Good Samaritan (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

iconographic detail which is similar in both the *Sacra Parallela* and Parisinus 510 is the way Christ holds Peter's mother-in-law by the wrist, in the scene of the relevant healing miracle.<sup>310</sup> This gesture is repeated in later representations of the event,<sup>311</sup> and perhaps derives from yet another iconographic convention which was used to signal the interaction between an active, energetic figure and a helpless, weak one. For example, Christ holds Adam by the wrist in images of the Anastasis, in ninth-century paintings that were produced either in Constantinople or in Rome.<sup>312</sup> The same gesture appears in much earlier representations of Christ's healing miracles, for example the raising of Jairus's daughter (who is also lying on a bed, like Peter's mother-in-law) on the fourth-century Brescia casket.<sup>313</sup> In other words, the use of generic iconographic

motifs cannot be taken to support the use of specific iconographic models.<sup>314</sup>

Another argument often put forward by Weitzmann to support his model theory was the frequent lack of correspondence that he identified between text and image in the Paris *Sacra Parallela*, a characteristic that he explained through the assumption that the miniaturist made mistakes while copying his models: he copied the wrong miniatures, or too many miniatures, or miniatures in the wrong sequence.<sup>315</sup> However, the above analysis has

cian church of New Tokali, where Jesus holds the patient by the wrist. See Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 454, fig. 112. The above examples are randomly selected and not exhaustive.

<sup>314</sup> In all the cases mentioned above, Brubaker saw evidence to support the hypothesis that Parisinus 923 was created in Constantinople, but in my view the similarities she identified between this manuscript and Parisinus 510 cannot be proven to be specific to a Constantinopolitan iconographic tradition. The provenance of Parisinus 923 is hotly debated among scholars, the two basic contestants being Italy/Rome and Constantinople (Weitzmann's attribution to Palestine is not widely accepted). See Brubaker, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era* (n. 10 above), 49, n. 68, for an overview of the relevant literature, and Corrigan, *Visual Polemics* (n. 47 above), 110, n. 35. In 2002, Oretskaia, "A Stylistic Tendency" (n. 12 above), esp. 11–14, argued systematically for an Italian provenance, following Grabar's observations. In notes 2 and 3 she gives an exhaustive list of previous literature on the provenance of codices Paris. gr. 923, Vat. gr. 749, and Ambros. E 49–50.

<sup>315</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 12, 14, and *passim*.

<sup>310</sup> Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, 391.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, 391, n. 193.

<sup>312</sup> As, for example, on folios 63r and 63v of the Chludov Psalter (Ščepkina, *Miniatjry Khludovskoi Psaltiri* [n. 71 above]), and in the wall painting of the Anastasis in the lower church of S. Clemente in Rome (J. Osborne, *Early Mediaeval Wall-Paintings in the Lower Church of San Clemente, Rome* [New York, 1984], 170–97, plates 24–26, 28).

<sup>313</sup> C. Brown Tkacz, *The Key to the Brescia Casket: Typology and the Early Christian Imagination* (Paris, 2002), 46, fig. 7 (on p. 44). Another example, which demonstrates that this gesture was very diffused in the iconography of Christ's miracles, is the wall painting with the healing of the man with the withered hand from the 10th-century Cappado-





Fig. 57 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 166v, Christ and the Canaanite woman (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

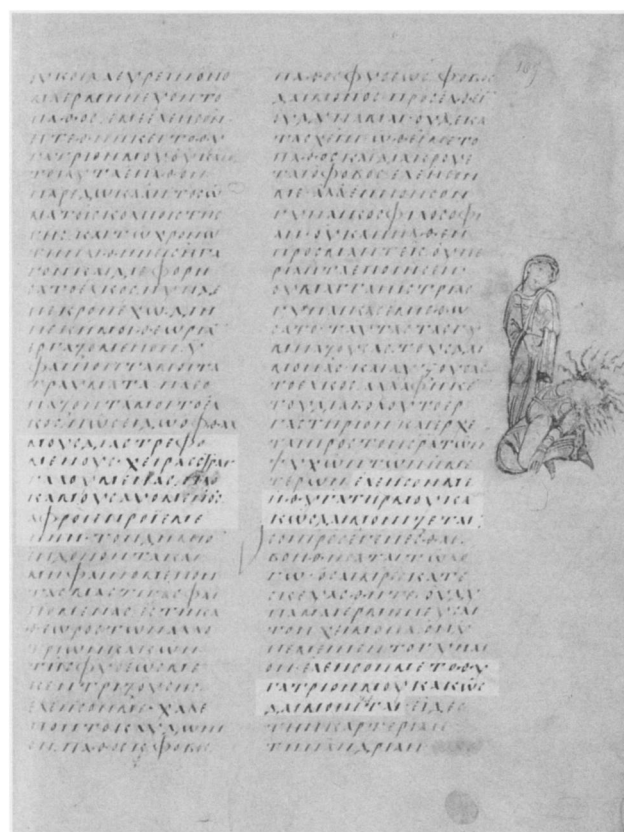


Fig. 58 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 167r, the Canaanite woman and her daughter (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

demonstrated a close connection between text and image in Parisinus 923; any apparent discrepancy between them is in fact the result of the painter's emphasis on narrative and his interpretative approach to the illustrated passages, with the intention of serving the moral message of the florilegium context. It is exactly because he ignored this context that Weitzmann often saw a lack of correspondence between text and image where there was none. The following example clearly demonstrates my point.

On folios 166v–170r of the *Sacra Parallela* appear five miniatures illustrating the Gospel episode of the Canaanite woman whose persistent pleas convinced Christ, initially silent and negative toward her, to expel the demon torturing her daughter (Figs. 57–61, details in Figs. 62–66).<sup>316</sup> In four miniatures the woman is shown at Christ's feet, and in one she appears next to her possessed

daughter.<sup>317</sup> Weitzmann thought that these miniatures were copied from a Gospel book with an exceptionally extensive illumination, since a passage that takes up only seven verses in Matthew's Gospel was accompanied by five miniatures. Moreover, Weitzmann claimed that the miniaturist mistakenly altered the sequence of miniatures he was copying: in order to follow the sequence of the Gospel story, his third miniature (Figs. 59 and 64, where Christ does not reply to the woman) should be first, while the first miniature (Figs. 57 and 62, where Jesus is making the speaking gesture) should be third.<sup>318</sup> Weitzmann seemed to disregard that the miniaturist is not illustrating the seven verses of Matthew's narration, where four almost identical miniatures of the woman at Christ's feet would have been meaninglessly repetitive (Figs. 62,

<sup>316</sup> The whole episode is narrated in Matthew 15:21–28.

<sup>317</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 420–24.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid., 166–67, figs. 420, 422.

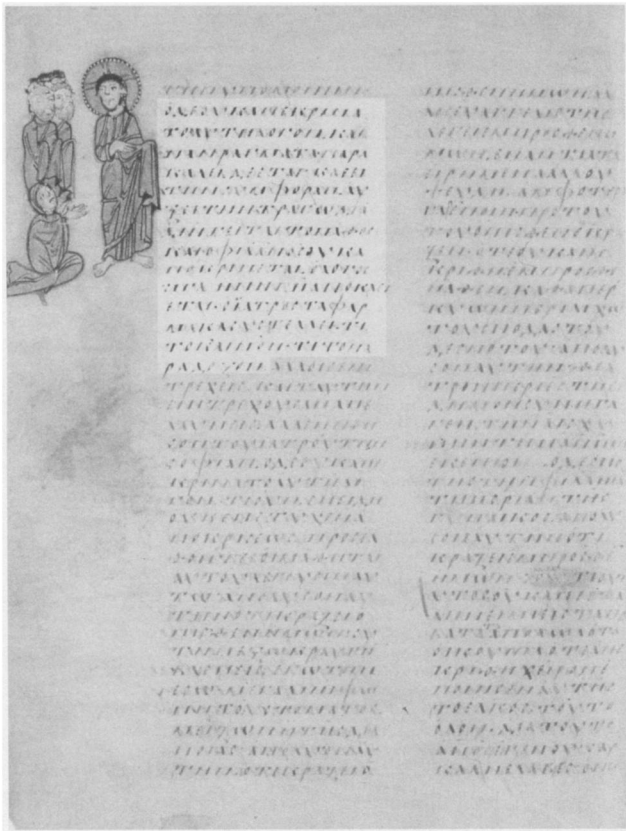


Fig. 59 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 167v, Christ and the Canaanite woman (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



Fig. 60 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 168r, Christ and the Canaanite woman (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

64–66).<sup>319</sup> On the contrary, he is illustrating an excerpt from John Chrysostom's homily on the Canaanite woman, which takes up nine pages in the *Sacra Parallela* codex and is compiled under the title "On prayer and on the good we can accomplish through it" (Figs. 57–61).<sup>320</sup> The minia-

**319** Compare, for example, the four different miniatures illustrating this Gospel passage in cod. Laur. VI. 23, fol. 32r: the daughter is shown in bed, dogs are eating crumbs from their master's table, the Canaanite woman runs after Christ, and then falls in proskynesis before him, while he addresses his disciples; see Velmans, *Laur. VI. 23* (n. 88 above), plate 19, fig. 69. Carr (review of *Sacra Parallela* [n. 29 above], 149) also suspected that the sequence of the five *Sacra Parallela* miniatures illustrating the story of the Canaanite woman corresponded to John Chrysostom's homily rather than to Matthew's Gospel, but she could not be very specific, since she did not have full-page photos of the manuscript with which to identify the exact passages accompanied by the miniatures.

**320** Fols. 166r–170r. For the whole excerpt see PG 95:1444A–1452B. The title in cod. Paris. gr. 923 is ΠΕΡΙ ΕΥΧΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΟΥΚ ΑΔΕΥΧΗΣ ΚΑΤΟΡΘΟΥΝΤΑΙ ΗΜΙΝ ΑΓΑΘΑ, fol. 161v. In PG 95:1436B the title is Περὶ εὐχῆς· καὶ ὅσα δι' εὐχῆς κατορθοῦνται ἡμῖν.

turist faithfully illustrates John Chrysostom's narration, which emphasizes the faith of the woman who persistently prayed at Christ's feet. The iconographic details of all five miniatures correspond closely to relevant passages of the homily (Figs. 57–66): the first miniature with Christ in a speaking gesture appears right next to a passage of the homily where Chrysostom stages a brief dramatic dialogue between Christ and the woman, in order to stress the accessibility of God through the Logos incarnate.<sup>321</sup>

**321** See PG 95:1445A. In cod. Paris. gr. 923, a large initial A next to Christ emphasizes the phrase ΑΝΩ ΤΡΟΜΟΚ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΤΩ ΠΑΡΡΗΧΙΑ (terror above and freedom to speak below), which introduces the brief dialogue of Christ and the woman (see PG 95:1445A). In this context, ΠΑΡΡΗΧΙΑ refers to the ability of humans to talk directly to God thanks to the Incarnation of the Logos in Christ. Perhaps for this reason the painter employed a speaking gesture when representing not only the woman but also the apostles addressing Christ (while in the other three miniatures they have their hands covered; cf. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 420, 422–24).

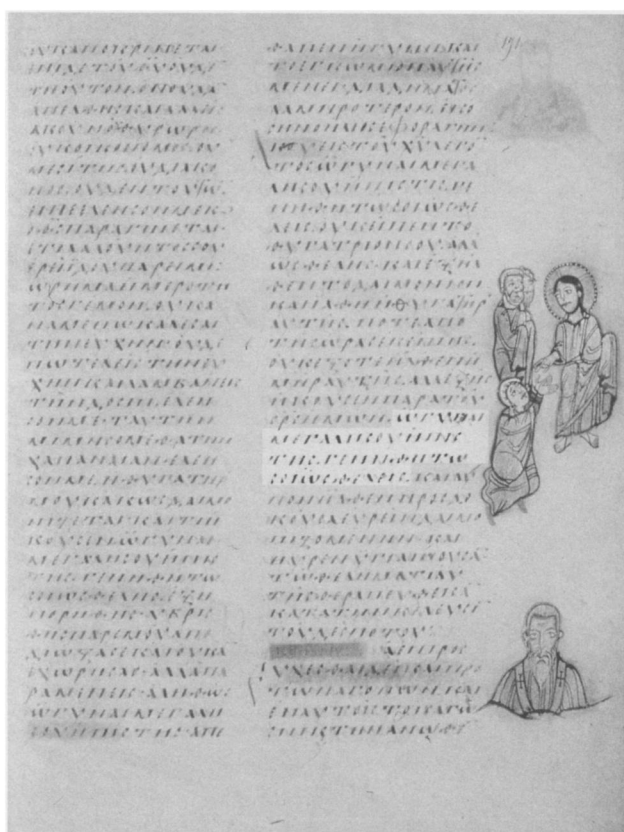


Fig. 61 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 170r, Christ and the Canaanite woman (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

The image of the demonized daughter corresponds to her mother's description of her suffering.<sup>322</sup> The third miniature, where Jesus is not making the speaking gesture, appears indeed next to a passage where Chrysostom mentions Christ's initial silence in front of the pleading woman.<sup>323</sup> The fourth miniature corresponds to the homily passage where, according to Matthew's Gospel, Christ argues, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel. It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs." And the woman replies, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."<sup>324</sup> The last miniature, where Christ openly addresses the

woman, illustrates the homily's reference to the final act of the episode, when Jesus says "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted."<sup>325</sup>

Through his attentive illustration of the text, the miniaturist successfully dramatized the story and highlighted its moral message: the power of faith and prayer. There are no grounds to suggest that he copied a model here, especially a model as richly illuminated as Weitzmann supposed. The scholar often hypothesized a super-illustrated model precisely because a very brief and at times even insignificant episode of the Bible is illustrated with a series of miniatures in our manuscript. The obvious explanation is that the passage is especially important within its *Sacra Parallela* context, where it promotes the message of the relevant title under which it has been compiled. It is this usefulness in serving the didactic purpose of the florilegium that led to its illustration, rather than the availability of extensively illustrated models.

The following example is very characteristic in this respect: On folio 203r are represented three successive episodes described in 2 Kings 12:20–23. David, after having been informed of the death of his youngest child, washes himself (Fig. 67), worships God, and feasts on a rich meal.<sup>326</sup> Weitzmann noted, "No parallel is known to any of these representations." Since three miniatures are dedicated to a rather insignificant event in the second book of Kings, Weitzmann assumed that the illustrated codex from which these miniatures were copied must have had an extensive miniature cycle: the more important events of the text must have been illustrated with at least as many miniatures as the less significant events.<sup>327</sup> He concludes: "One cannot help being startled by what this implies for the picture cycle of the original Books of Kings."<sup>328</sup> Weitzmann's amazement and his subsequent conclusion are due to his examination of these three miniatures in isolation from their specific context (the florilegium title under which they appear), and only in connection to their original biblical context. The title of the relevant chapter of our codex is "On the dead and on the bereaved, and that we must not grieve for those who have died."<sup>329</sup> Such was David's behavior after his child's

322 See PG 95:1445C, "Πῶς εἶδον ὀφθαλμοὺς διαστρεφόμενους, χεῖρας στραγγαλούμενας, πλοκάμους λυομένους, ἀφρόν προίμενην. . . ." Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 421.

323 See PG 95:1445D. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 422.

324 See PG 95:1448C, Matthew 15:26–27. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 423.

325 See PG 95:1452A, Matthew 15:28. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, fig. 424.

326 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 134–36.

327 Ibid., 85.

328 Ibid., 96.

329 Under the same title, the death of Job's children and his prayer to God are illustrated. See above, pp. 153–54 and n. 178.



**Fig. 62** Detail of Fig. 57.



**Fig. 63** Detail of Fig. 58.



**Fig. 64** Detail of Fig. 59.



**Fig. 65** Detail of Fig. 60.



**Fig. 66** Detail of Fig. 61.





**Fig. 67** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 203r, David takes a bath (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



**Fig. 68** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 373v, Susanna and the Elders (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

death, to the amazement of his servants. They asked him why, when the child was ill but alive, he prayed, fasted, and mourned, but when the child died he ceased his lamentation; he answered that before the child's death he hoped to secure God's mercy, but afterward it was useless for him to grieve, because he could not bring the child back to life. In other words, the artist illustrated this passage not because he had a model (rather unlikely), but because it offered him the perfect opportunity to render visually the general message of the florilegium title under which it was compiled.

Besides, as Annemarie Weyl Carr has observed, the striking iconographic similarities between the bathing scenes of David, Bathsheba, and Susanna, in three different parts of the codex, could indicate that our painter did not copy them from models (which, if they ever existed, must have been from different codices, one for Kings and one for the Prophets, and consequently would probably have included dissimilar bathing scenes); most likely, he created them *ad hoc* for the illustration of the Paris *Sacra Parallela*, using the same formula in the depiction of all three bathers (compare Figs. 67, 68).<sup>330</sup>

Obviously, the painter of Parisinus 923 was not infallible, but his mistakes do not necessarily prove he was unsuccessfully copying a model, or that he was using as a model a codex with a different version of text, which led him to produce images that do not correspond to the *Sacra Parallela* text; it can simply mean that he was less attentive than usual in reading and faithfully illustrating the text he had in front of him. As already discussed, the miniatures which illustrate the story of the Levite's concubine might fall into this category.

The characteristic cases already presented allow us to conclude the following: Weitzmann's theory that most of the Paris *Sacra Parallela* miniatures were copied from at least seventeen super-illustrated model books is not substantiated by specific arguments of adequate validity. Moreover, such a theory seems incompatible with the real working conditions that the miniaturist of our codex would have experienced: since the biblical and patristic excerpts rapidly alternate in various combinations throughout the florilegium, the miniaturist would often have to use a larger or smaller number of different model books for every quaternion he illustrated, in accordance with Weitzmann's theory. This would make the

<sup>330</sup> Carr, review of *Sacra Parallela* (n. 29 above), 149. Cf. Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 134, 131, 393.

production of the manuscript extremely complicated. It seems more reasonable to assume that the painter based his images principally on the texts he was illustrating and on his general visual background—built upon his training according to the apprenticeship practices of his time and the images he would have seen throughout his life in the monuments, manuscripts, and other objects he would have encountered.<sup>331</sup> In other words, the evidence from the illustration of the *Sacra Parallela* fully supports John Lowden's observation that Byzantine artists "could readily invent images for which there was no specific detailed precedent by skillfully reformulating familiar compositions, types, and individual elements."<sup>332</sup> It cannot be excluded that the *Sacra Parallela* painter used a few illustrated manuscripts as sources of inspiration, but this does not mean that he would have slavishly and uncritically copied what he saw in those books, so that we can accurately recreate them on the basis of the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures. Lowden's work on the middle Byzantine Octateuchs has shown that, even in the case of these codices, whose production *was* programmatically based on precise archetypes (a rare case altogether in Byzantine manuscript illumination), the painters often diverged from their models.<sup>333</sup> In her work on Parisinus 510, Leslie Brubaker has also stressed that "miniaturists who specifically intended to copy a picture cycle did not view 'copying' as a mechanical reproduction," to be carried out in an uncritical and blind manner. Parisinus 510 never provides us "with an obvious example of straightforward copying." On the contrary, most of its miniatures are based on modifications of "conventional and familiar iconography."<sup>334</sup> The evidence discussed above suggests that the painter of the *Sacra Parallela* did the same: most of his miniatures are adaptations of generic iconographic motifs, often enriched with details intended to highlight specific references in the text (e.g., the animals illustrating Job 38–39). Some cases attest to a particularly creative and inventive use of iconographic motifs (e.g., the combination of city walls and a portrait to present Basil as the protector of his congregation). In

the few cases when the use of a specific model appears plausible, it seems that the artist was elaborating on what he had in front of him. His intention was to emphasize specific elements of the passages he was illustrating in accordance with the message of their florilegium context. These elements might have been less important or presented in a different light in their original biblical or patristic context and relevant illustrations.

In other words, my intention is not to reject completely the thesis that models were used in the creation of the Paris *Sacra Parallela*, but to qualify this hypothesis in accordance with the internal and external evidence—both from the manuscript itself and from Byzantine art as a whole. The material discussed above indicates that we should be extremely cautious in the re-creation of hypothetical archetypes. For example, even if the painter of the *Sacra Parallela* had used illustrated codices as models, there is no evidence to suggest that the miniature cycles of those manuscripts would have been more extensive than what we see in the surviving illuminated codices dating to the pre- and post-iconoclast periods.<sup>335</sup> The super-illustrated manuscripts which Weitzmann hypothesized by bringing together all the surviving material and the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures are imaginary, and the Paris codex does not substantiate their existence. In this context, it is important to keep in mind that extensively illustrated pre-iconoclast codices like the Sinope and Rossano Gospels, the Cotton and Vienna Genesis, the Ashburnham Pentateuch and the Quedlinburg Itala Book of Kings were the exception among many other non-illustrated or sparsely illustrated codices that have not survived precisely because they were not exceptional. And even if the seventeen extensively illustrated books Weitzmann posits on the basis of the *Sacra Parallela* ever existed, it still is unlikely that such rare and extremely costly manuscripts would have been readily available in the workshop or the monastic scriptorium producing our codex. After all, the illustrated pre-iconoclast manuscripts known today are very different from each other in page format, illustration methods, and iconographic traditions, and they were probably unique productions, each made ad hoc for wealthy commissioners and not

331 Cf. Lowden, *Prophet Books* (n. 4 above), 91–92; idem, "Visual Knowledge" (n. 28 above), esp. 74–77. See also Brubaker, "Byzantine Culture in the Ninth Century" (n. 29 above), 68–71.

332 Lowden, "Visual Knowledge," 71.

333 Lowden, *Octateuchs* (n. 4 above), esp. 50, 52, 114. A similar discussion on the flexible use of models by Byzantine artists is found in Lowden, *Prophet Books*, 44–5, 47, 74, 87–8.

334 Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning* (n. 4 above), 397–99.

335 Also noted by Carr (review of *Sacra Parallela*, 149), although she does accept many of the models proposed by Weitzmann. It should be noted that in Lowden's view the Byzantine illustrated Prophet Books and Octateuchs are a middle Byzantine creation, and therefore they could not have been used as models by the *Sacra Parallela* painter (Lowden, *Prophet Books*, 75, 89–90; idem, *Octateuchs*, 84).



**Fig. 69** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 142v, creditor and debtor (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

for the library of a single monastery or the stock of a single workshop.<sup>336</sup> In other words, certain models were probably used by the *Sacra Parallela* makers, but if we focus on their uncritical re-creation, we risk losing sight of the manuscript we have at hand. The examination of the existing material—its individual characteristics and its function within its cultural context—is more meaningful and rewarding than hypotheses on material that is now irretrievably lost. With this idea in mind, I shall now make some concluding observations on the characteristics and function of the *Sacra Parallela* miniatures, while in a future article I hope to examine issues related to its cultural context.

I shall start with some general conclusions on the *Sacra Parallela* illustration. It has been already established that the painter of this codex was intent on following closely the content of the passages he was illustrating in order to emphasize their moral message and serve the didactic purpose of the florilegium. This goal was achieved not only by the faithful depiction of the events

narrated and the inclusion of the protagonists and other main characters mentioned in the text (as, for example, in the case of Christ's miracles) but also by attention to such additional factors as iconographic details, representation of emotions, and placement of miniatures on the folios.

Iconographic details were often employed to add clarity and accuracy to the images, as in the case of the animals illustrating Job 38–39, where attention to the rendering of the movement or physical characteristics of the animals (such as the pose of the wild ass and the staring eye of the vulture) closely reflect characterizations used in the text.

Facial features and gestures were often used to reflect the emotional condition of the characters in accordance with the situation in which they were depicted.<sup>337</sup> For example, distress, dismay, and sorrow are very vividly portrayed on the faces of the concubine humiliated by the abuse of the Benjamites, Susanna approached by the elders, and Jacob hearing the news of Joseph's death (Figs. 48, 68, 72).<sup>338</sup> The depiction of the greedy creditor thinking about his profit and the poor debtor despairing over his ruin are impressively expressive (Fig. 69).<sup>339</sup> Just through slight variations in the lines of the eyes and mouth and a careful selection of simple gestures the painter succeeded in adding life and emotion to his miniatures and emphasizing the message of the relevant florilegium titles.

The placement of the miniatures on the folios is usually designed to help the reader identify the relevant passage (thus, the miniatures appear next to or on the same level with the text they illustrate). At times, miniatures or figures depicted on the same or facing folios are related in ways that further emphasize the message of the text. For example, author portraits are sometimes placed next to each other or inside the same medallion, not because of lack of space on the folio, but to emphasize the authors' consensus on the subject discussed in their passages.<sup>340</sup>

One such case is worthy of special notice for the elements of elaboration that it presents: on folio 77v,

<sup>336</sup> For all the above considerations on the character of pre-iconoclast illustrated manuscripts see Lowden, "Beginnings of Biblical Illustration" (n. 28 above), 9–58.

<sup>337</sup> Also noted by Carr, review of *Sacra Parallela*, 148.

<sup>338</sup> Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 105, 393, 41.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid., fig. 561.

<sup>340</sup> As, for example, on fols. 78r (Evagrius and Philo), 123r (Luke and Mark), 141v (Matthew and Luke), and 205r (Gregory Nazianzenus and John Chrysostom). For reproductions of these miniatures see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 633, 456, 403, 661.

Acts 20:33 and Philippians 4:11–13 are illustrated by the combined busts of Peter and Paul (Fig. 70).<sup>341</sup> The two passages are compiled under the title “On lack of property, and on self-sufficiency and frugality,” and in both of them Paul talks about his relevant behavior.<sup>342</sup> Although Peter is not mentioned, the artist chose to represent him beside Paul, probably in order to stress their agreement on the subject and to emphasize that the first of the Apostles was also living according to the same values. The passage from Acts 20:33, at which both figures are looking, reads (my italics): “I never wanted any silver or gold or clothes. You know that I and my followers have been served *by these hands*” (my hands, i.e., Paul’s, who is speaking).<sup>343</sup> It is probably in response to this reference that the artist added a very eloquent iconographic detail to stress Peter’s and Paul’s common ideas and equally important ministry and sacrifice in self-sufficiency and frugality: he depicted only Peter’s left and Paul’s right hand in such a conspicuous way that they appear as the two hands of one and the same person. In this inventive way the painter achieved a triple goal: to bond together the two portraits, to relate them closely to the relevant passage, and in this way to emphasize the notion of apostolic agreement on the values discussed in this part of the florilegium. No other “twin portraits” in this codex present the same iconographic detail. For example, on the facing folio (78r) Evagrius and Philo appear in a double bust portrait, at the same level as the portraits of Peter and Paul, but their hands are fully covered under their mantles (Fig. 71).<sup>344</sup> This antithesis emphasizes even more the meaningful gesture of the apostles on folio 77v. It is probably not a coincidence that on folio 78r another pair of figures vividly interact through their hands: the dialogue of Rebecca and Jacob, shown

plotting against Esau, is portrayed through the interweaving of their hands, all four depicted in full view forming two tangent triangles, the top one pointing upward and the bottom one pointing downward.<sup>345</sup> In this opening of Parisinus 923 (77v–78r, Figs. 70–71), six author portraits appear in addition to Peter, Paul, Rebecca, and Esau; in all of these portraits the hands of the figures are fully covered.<sup>346</sup> In this way, the significant gestures of the apostolic and the Old Testament figures become more conspicuous and draw a connection between the two pairs. The title under which Rebecca and Jacob appear proclaims that a deceit done according to providence is praiseworthy.<sup>347</sup> It is therefore possible that the painter placed emphasis on the gestures of the two Old and New Testament pairs in order to stress that the hands which work for self-sufficiency and those which plot for a good reason are equally blessed by God.

Another case worthy of attention is the placement of an author portrait between the two parts of a narrative miniature, so that the author seems to assume the role of commentator on the event (Fig. 72): in the lower margin of folio 16v, Jacob is shown receiving the blood-stained garment of Joseph which his other sons used to convince him of his favorite child’s death, and he is then depicted grieving and tearing his garments. A medallion with Isaiah’s bust is depicted between the two scenes. The prophet is looking toward Joseph’s brothers, as if displeased by their act. This might not be accidental. The medallion is placed right next to the heading which introduces Isaiah’s passage on messengers of good news: “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring news of peace, who bring good news.” This is the last passage compiled under the title “On good news.”<sup>348</sup> The story of Jacob receiving the report of his son’s death is the first excerpt under the title “On bad news,” which follows immediately after Isaiah’s passage.<sup>349</sup>

341 Ibid., 189, fig. 484. Weitzmann identified the two apostles as John and Peter, but both of the biblical quotations next to this miniature report Paul’s words, so he must be the one represented on the left, with Peter next to him.

342 Fol. 77r: ΠΕΡΙΑΚΤΗΜΟCΥΝΗC ΚΑΙ ΑΥΤΑΡΚΕΙΑC ΚΑΙ ΟΛΙΓΟΔΕΙΑC. PG 95:1220D (identical title) and 1221BC (Acts 20:33 and Philippians 4:11–13, mistakenly reported as Philippians 8:11–12. All the quotations excerpted under this title in PG are the same in Paris. gr. 923.)

343 Only the second sentence of this passage appears at the top of fol. 77v (the first being written at the bottom of fol. 77r): ΓΙΝΩCΚΕΤΑΙ ΟΤΙ ΤΑΙC ΧΡΕΙ/ΑΙC ΜΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΙC ΟΥCΙΝ ΜΕ/ΤΕ ΜΟΥ ΥΠΗΡΕΘΗCΑΝ ΑΙ ΧΕΙΡΕC / ΑΥΤΑΙ. In Fig. 70, I have highlighted the word ΧΕΙΡΕC (hands).

344 Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 227, fig. 633.

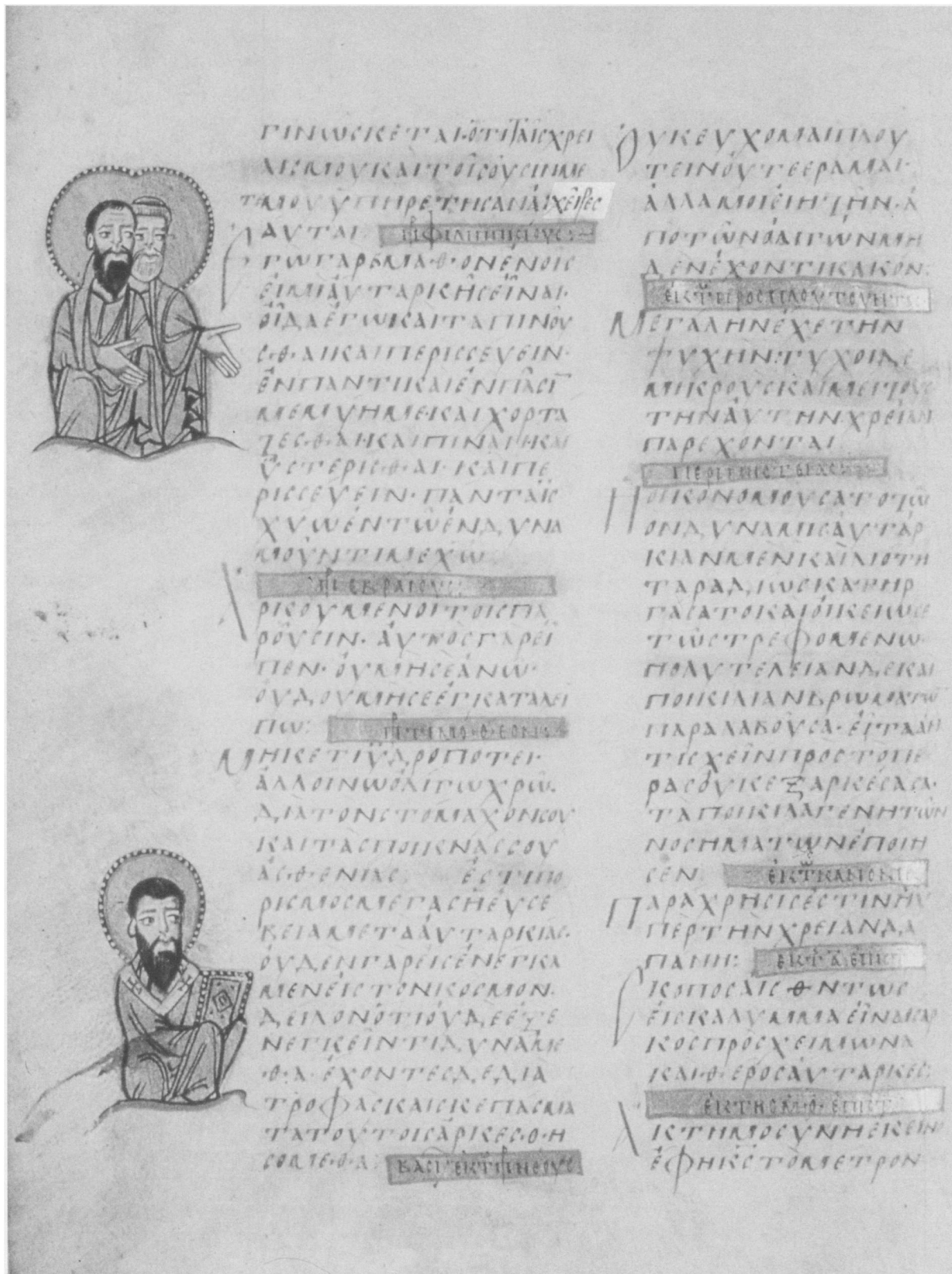
345 For a close-up see *ibid.*, fig. 33.

346 Fol. 77v: at the lower part of the lateral margin, St. Basil, Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 214, fig. 573. Fol. 78r: at the upper part of the lateral margin, Evagrius and Philo (Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 227, fig. 633); at the lower margin, three medallions with portraits of Gregory Nazianzenus, Gregory of Nyssa, and Nilos of Constantinople, *ibid.*, 233, 236, 251.

347 See n. 121, above.

348 Fol. 16v: ΠΕΡΙ ΑΓΓΕΛΙΑC ΑΓΑΘΗC. (Identical in PG 95:1241A.) The relevant passage is Isaiah 52:7.

349 Fol. 16v: ΠΕΡΙ ΑΓΓΕΛΙΑC ΚΑΚΗC. (Likewise in PG 95:1241B.) The relevant passage is Genesis 37:31–34.



**Fig. 70** Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 77v, SS. Peter and Paul and St. Basil (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)





Fig. 71 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 78r, Evagrius and Philo; Rebecca plots with Jacob; SS. Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and Nilos of Constantinople (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)



Fig. 72 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 16v, Jacob receives news of Joseph's death, Isaiah, and Jacob mourns (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

If the painter wanted only to relate the prophet's portrait to his words, he could have depicted him frontally (or looking toward his text), and he could have placed his portrait at the lower left corner of the page, preceding the miniature with Jacob and his sons. In his actual position, Isaiah looks disapprovingly at Joseph's brothers, as if criticizing them for being messengers of false bad news, rather than messengers of peace.

The combination of two different stories in one composition appears in the *Sacra Parallela* for specific reasons that have nothing to do with copying mistakes. Thus the juxtaposition of the vine tree and the healing of the paralytic visually reinforces the moral message of the two relevant passages (Fig. 7). In other cases, like the miniature in which Christ talks to Jairus while the woman with the issue of blood touches his garment, or the miniature in which Christ heals a blind man and a deaf-mute mentioned in two different chapters of Matthew's Gospel (Figs. 11, 12), the combination is due to lack of space on the folio and the proximity of the relevant Gospel passages in the florilegium, but it

is also reasonable in the sense that it does not obscure or alter the meaning of the texts illustrated. Since the relevant florilegium chapter is a catalogue of the miracles performed by Christ, the prophets, and the apostles, these combinations allowed the painter to depict miracles that he would otherwise have had to omit due to lack of space on the folio.

Since by its nature the florilegium contains mostly brief passages from various sources (and often the passages compiled on two facing folios comment upon different subjects), the painter could rarely construct an interrelation between miniatures in these openings. The eloquent gestures which seem to connect the figures on folios 77v–78r, discussed above, might be an exception to this rule (Figs. 70–71). Two other openings of the codex are illustrated with miniatures which are most likely designed to work together, as a whole. These two are noteworthy cases because they demonstrate attentive planning with the intent to transmit a specific message.

The interrelation of the miniatures on folios 68v–69r is underlined by their symmetrical analogies and is rich



Fig. 73 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 39v, Isaiah's vision (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

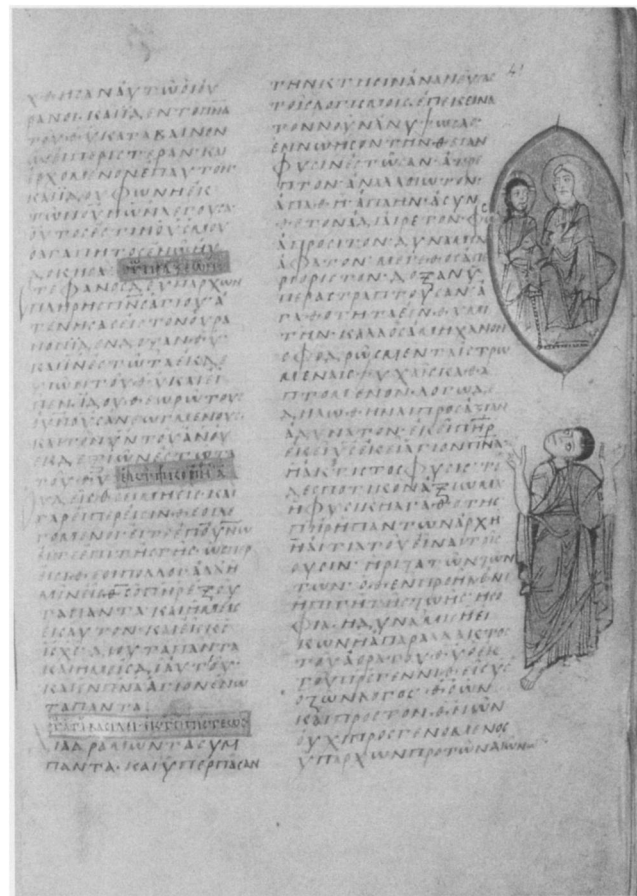


Fig. 74 Cod. Paris. gr. 923, fol. 4or, Stephen's vision (photo courtesy of the Bibliothèque nationale de France)

in theological implications (Figs. 26–27): the lateral margins of the pages each contain a single composition, both divided into three superimposed parts inspired by the relevant texts. On the left, a scene of the Last Judgment illustrates a passage from John Chrysostom, included in the chapter “On resurrection and the day of judgment and eternal punishment.”<sup>350</sup> Beneath the image of Christ enthroned appear angels in veneration and the just in paradise, while further down the sinners are shown burning in hell. On the right, Adam, Eve, and the serpent are cursed by God, and Cain is rebuked after the murder of his brother, who appears buried below him. These images illustrate Genesis excerpts that introduce

the chapter “On the curse of the Lord and of the prophets and of the apostles.”<sup>351</sup> These full-margin miniatures work together even independently from the text, since they mark the beginning and end of humanity’s sinful history, the Fall and Redemption. It seems probable that the artist chose deliberately to illustrate only the final passage of the long chapter “On resurrection and judgment,” in order to juxtapose it with the illustration of the beginning of the next chapter.

A similar case of symmetrical and meaningful interrelation of miniatures appears on folios 39v–4or (Figs. 73–74), where each of the two compositions occupies the largest part of the lateral margin. Since they both

<sup>350</sup> Fol. 63r: ΠΕΡΙ ΑΝΑΓΓΕΛΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΗΜΕΡΑΣ ΚΡΙΣΕΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΙΩΝΙΑΣ ΚΟΛΑΣΕΩΣ (“Περὶ ἀναστάσεως, καὶ κρίσεως, αἰωνίας κολάσεως” in PG 95:1176A). For the passage by John Chrysostom see PG 95:1185CD.

<sup>351</sup> Fol. 69r: ΠΕΡΙ ΑΡΑΣ ΥΠΟ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ ΓΕΝΟΜΕΝΗΣ (“Περὶ ἀρᾶς ὑπὸ κυρίου, καὶ τῶν προφητῶν, καὶ ἀποστόλων ποτὲ γενομένης” in PG 95:1188BC). The relevant passages are Genesis 3:14–19 and Genesis 4:9–12.

illustrate a vision, they have a similar bipartite structure, with the visionary at the bottom, raising his hands and his eyes toward heaven, where God appears. On the left, Isaiah looks at Christ enthroned on two six-winged seraphim, while on the right Stephen the Protomartyr gazes at the glory of God and of the Son seated next to him.<sup>352</sup> The title under which the relevant passages are compiled is “On the eternal divinity of the holy and consubstantial Trinity.”<sup>353</sup> Probably such full-margin facing compositions (quite rare in the Paris *Sacra Parallela*) were intended to emphasize the principal idea the reader should always keep in mind while studying the florilegium: the omnipotence and absolute authority of God, and his eternal presence throughout history (as the one and only God of both the Old and the New Testaments). This idea was as important for this didactic compilation as judgment, punishment, and salvation, concepts presented in the only other surviving full-margin interrelated compositions of this codex (Figs. 26–27). In both cases the artist chose not to distract attention from the basic concepts presented by these miniatures, so he did not paint any author portraits in the upper and lower margins of the folios—contrary to his usual practice.

In conclusion, the illustration of the Paris *Sacra Parallela* was a demanding assignment which presented several challenges—the large number of pages and excerpts requiring illustration, the fragmentary nature of the passages compiled in the florilegium, and the spatial limits imposed by the narrow margins of the folios. The painter confronted his task conscientiously. Although he did not always show the same attention to details and sometimes made mistakes or positioned the miniatures (especially author portraits) in ways that make it difficult to relate them to the relevant passages,<sup>354</sup> on the whole he planned

and executed his task carefully. Obviously, it is impossible to explain his precise motives in all the choices he made in the illustration of the entire codex, since the inspiration of a miniaturist depends not only on the texts he illustrates, or his abilities and visual resources, but also on decisions and moods of the moment, as well as personal preferences that cannot be measured. For example, the miniaturist of Parisinus 923 painted author portraits next to certain passages and left others totally unillustrated. This could have been a random choice, but in some cases it could also indicate that the miniaturist wanted to focus the reader’s attention on the passages which he accompanied with author portraits. Another way he might have striven for the same result was to highlight certain passages by illustrating them with narrative scenes rather than portraits; however, the nature of the passages themselves (narrative or not) was also a factor in his decision. On the other hand, passages that were more theoretical than narrative in nature (for example, moral exhortations) were illustrated by scenes of a more symbolic nature, like Basil towering protectively above his congregation, or the true vine flourishing behind the healed paralytic. At the same time, purely narrative passages could also inspire images of symbolic overtones, like Phinehas riding in armor to defeat his sinful opponents. In other words, we cannot always know why the painter made one choice over another, but we can often appreciate the results that he achieved.

The function of the miniatures he produced can be summarized as follows: The author portraits seem designed to verify the authenticity of the excerpted texts, even if the authors themselves do not always have an authentic, that is, a consistent portrait.<sup>355</sup> The impressively high number of author portraits might also be intended to celebrate this florilegium as a thesaurus of biblical and patristic wisdom. The narrative miniatures, on the other hand, illustrate and at times emphasize or exegetically comment upon the moral message of certain excerpts, enhancing the didactic value of the florilegium. Admittedly, sophisticated exegetical miniatures like the composition which combines the paralytic and the vine tree or the miniatures which present Basil and Gregory as the protectors of their congregation and the embodiment of safe refuge (Figs. 7, 24), are the exception in the corpus. However, images which complement or elaborate upon the text, like the depiction of Elijah giving his

352 For close-ups see Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, figs. 349, 490.

353 Fol. 39r: ΠΕΡΙ ΑΙΔΙΟΥ ΘΕΟΤΗΤΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΟΜΟΟΥΣΙΟΥ ΤΡΙΑΔΟΣ (to which, PG 95:1069C adds “καὶ ὅτι εἰς καὶ μόνος ἐπὶ πάντων ὁ Θεός.” In cod. Paris. gr. 923 this title is not the first of the whole florilegium as in the Vatican recension, PG 95:1069C.) The excerpts illustrated are Isaiah 6:1–3 and Acts 7:55–56 (PG 95:1072B, D; in the second case the passage is mistakenly identified as Acts 7:15). For a more detailed analysis of the miniature on fol. 40r (Fig. 74) see A. Grabar, “La représentation de l’intelligible dans l’art byzantin du Moyen Age,” *Actes du Ve Congrès international des Etudes Byzantines*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1948), repr. idem, *L’art de la fin de l’antiquité et du moyen-âge* (Paris, 1968), 54; S. Tsuji, “The Headpiece Miniatures and Genealogy Pictures in Paris Gr. 74,” *DOP* 29 (1975): 183–84; Weitzmann, *Sacra Parallela*, 190.

354 For example, it is rather difficult to decipher who is who among the many authors represented on fol. 88r.

355 See Brubaker and Corrigan, as in n. 47, above.

mantle to Elisha as a reward for his perseverance (Fig. 22), the depiction of Solomon speaking words of wisdom rather than receiving the praise of the queen of Sheba for them (Fig. 28), and the depiction of Hezekiah as an aged man thanking God for the extended life given to him as a reward for his virtuousness (Fig. 42), can also be considered exegetical, in the sense that they emphasize and thus clarify the moral message of the relevant passages within the florilegium context. In any case, within the large number of miniatures which the artist had to execute, the existence of even a few compositions which play the role of visual commentary of more or less sophisticated character is noteworthy, and it should predispose us to examine with respect the creations of this diligent painter.<sup>356</sup> Regardless of individual features, all his narrative miniatures have something in common: shining in gold leaf, outlined in bold black lines, composed of a few figures with no superficial surrounding elements, they almost seem like mnemonic devices that would have captured the attention and would have left a lasting imprint on the memory of each florilegium reader. The extensive use of lavish gold leaf both for the titles of the compilation and for the miniatures seems to imply the equally high status of text and image and their synergy for the transmission of the florilegium's moral message (cf. Fig. 25). Moreover, the profusion of gold expresses, in very pragmatic but also very symbolic terms, the preciousness of this codex, which was intended to safeguard and present the splendor of biblical and patristic wisdom.<sup>357</sup> The

effort and money put into the illustration of Parisinus 923 and the dynamic relationship of word and image that characterizes it resulted from, but also contributed to, the continuous relevance that this wisdom had in Byzantine culture, where the living tradition of the past was a basic guideline for the future.

There is much more to be said on the Paris *Sacra Parallela*, and certainly the more scholarly attention it receives, the better. The main purpose of the present article has been to shed more light on the relationship between word and image, in order to contribute to our understanding of the method and purpose of production of this unparalleled codex. My research does not aim to be conclusive, save in one respect: the Paris *Sacra Parallela* is not a shattered mirror of the artistic tradition which preceded it; it is an exceptional object of its time and therefore a treasury of information which might never yield all its secrets but will certainly reward anyone who tries to discover them.

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<sup>356</sup> Brubaker (*Vision and Meaning* [n. 4 above], 37–43, esp. 37–38) observed that 9th-century manuscripts normally include a large number of miniatures based on generic iconographical formulae (which she termed “uncharacterized” imagery) and a small number of miniatures (“single-instance adjustments”) which present peculiarities intended to “serve such a particular purpose that they occur only in very specific circumstances.”

<sup>357</sup> See also *ibid.*, 37, where Brubaker states that gold in Byzantine art is to be understood as a sign of divinity; the extensive use of gold in the

*Sacra Parallela* should thus be understood to mean that “the sanctity of the whole book (the manuscript as an object) or, more likely, the validity of imagery itself . . . is being given a divine *imprimatur*.” Since gold is also used for the florilegium titles and the headings which identify the excerpted passages, it is perhaps more accurate to suppose that it is the manuscript as a whole, as a combination of words and images, that is given this “divine *imprimatur*,” rather than the illustration alone. See also Brubaker, “Byzantine Art in the Ninth Century” (n. 11 above), 45, 57, where the extensive use of gold in 9th-century manuscripts like the *Sacra Parallela* and the Milan Gregory is related to the iconophile belief that art has to be “functionally instructive and ‘made from the purest and most splendid material’.”